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Goodbye Comrade: Left's light Yechury goes out

The CPI-M leader was known as master of coalition politics

NEW DELHI, 12 SEPT

CPI(M) General Secretary Sitaram Yechury died at AIIMS here on Thursday following a prolonged illness. He was 72.

Yechury had been in a critical condition for the last few days and was on respiratory support.

The CPI(M) had said earlier that the 72-year-old leader was being treated for an acute respiratory tract infection at the ICU in All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS).

Yechury's family has donated his body to AIIMS for teaching and research purposes, the hospital said in a statement.

In a statement, the CPI(M) said Yechury's body will be kept at the party headquarters here between 11 am and 3 pm on Saturday for public viewing and paying homage. Subsequently, the body will be taken to AIIMS, where it will be donated for medical research, according to his wishes.

Yechury was admitted to AIIMS on 19 August for treatment of a pneumonia-like chest infection.

Sitaram Yechury served as a Rajya Sabha MP for 12 years, from 2005 to 2017 ***PHOTO: PTI***

He was critical and on oxygen support. Sources said he had a fungal infection in his lungs.

Yechury is survived by his wife Seema Chishti, an Editor with news portal The Wire. He has three children -- two sons and a daughter. One of his sons Ashish Yechury died due to Covid-19 in 2021.

His daughter Akhila Yechury teaches at the University of Edinburgh and University of St Andrews.

Yechury was earlier married to Indrani Mazumdar.

The leader, who started from the student's union of Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) as a member of the Students' Federation of India (SFI) and went on to become a member of the Central Committee of the CPI(M) in 1984, got elected to the Politburo in 1992.

He served as a Rajya Sabha MP for 12 years, from 2005 to 2017. He became the fifth general secretary of the CPI(M) at the 21st party congress in Visakhapatnam on 19 April, 2015, and took over from Prakash Karat.

He also played a significant role in the joint opposition's INDIA bloc. He was seen among the political mentors of Congress leader and Lok Sabha Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi. *—PTI*

>>>More on Pages 3 & 5

> He was a leading light of the Left and was known for his ability to connect across the political spectrum. He also made a mark as an effective Parliamentarian.
>
> -Narendra Modi, PM

> Yechury enriched public life with his wisdom, wit, and unwavering convictions. He was instrumental in shaping the UPA 1 government and led the drafting of Common Minimum Programmes that transformed India's policy approach on critical issues.
>
> -Siddaramaiah, CM

> First as a student leader and then in national politics and as a parliamentarian, he had a distinct and influential voice. Through a committed ideologue, he won friends cutting across the party lines.
>
> -Droupadi Murmu, President

Didi says 'ready to quit' after doctors' no show at meeting

KOLKATA, 12 SEPT

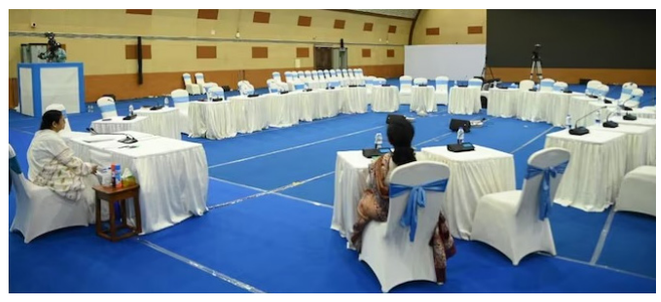
West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Thursday said she was "ready to resign" for the "sake of people" and expressed regret over the junior doctors' refusal to come for talks to resolve the impasse over the RG Kar rape-murder case.

Banerjee waited for nearly two hours for the agitating doctors to come for the meeting. She apologised to the people of West Bengal for the continued deadlock.

"We have tolerated a lot of canards and insults for the last 33 days," she said. She also assured the protesters that despite violating the Supreme Court directive by not resuming duties, she would not take any action.

Junior doctors, who reached the state secretariat Nabanna, refused to talk with the state government unless the meeting was live streamed. Banerjee said the meeting cannot be live-streamed as the issue is sub-judice. She said they would record the meeting instead.

She said, " People came out for justice but they don't know that there is a political colour diverting it... They want the chair. I am ready to resign from my post for the sake of the people. I don't want the chair." She added, "I know many in the delegation were interested in talks. But two or three people were getting instructions from outside, asking them not to negotiate, not go to the meeting." The junior doctors began their strike on 9 August, hours after the body of a female trainee was found in the hospital's seminar room. *—PTI*



TMC in a post on X said that WB CM Mamata Banerjee waited for almost two hours to meet the agitating doctors ***PHOTO: X/@AITCofficial***

Mandya: 52 held after clashes during Ganesha festivities

NAGAMANGALA, 12 SEPT

Fifty-two people have been arrested following the clashes that broke out between two groups during a Ganesha idol procession at Nagamangala in Mandya district on Wednesday. Mobs went on a rampage targeting shops and vehicles leading to a tense situation. A few people, including two policemen, sustained minor injuries in stone-pelting. Prohibitory orders preventing the assembly of more than four people have been imposed till 14 September in the town as a precautionary measure. *—Salar News*

>>>More on Page 2

In SC, NCPCR thrashes madrassa education

NEW DELHI, 12 SEPT

Madrassas are "unsuitable" places for children to receive "proper education" and the education imparted there is "not comprehensive" and is against the provisions of the Right to Education Act, the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) has told Supreme Court. The child rights body told the top court that children, who are not in formal schooling system, are deprived of their fundamental right to elementary education, including entitlements such as midday meal, uniform etc. *—PTI*

>>>More on Page 4

PHOTO: PTI

Vir Das becomes first Indian to host Emmy Award

NEW DELHI, 12 SEPT

Actor-comedian Vir Das has been announced as the host for the 52nd edition of the International Emmy Awards, making him the first Indian to emcee the event held annually in the US. The ceremony will be held in New York City on 25 November. It marks Das' return to the International Emmy stage after he won the best comedy award for his Netflix stand-up special 'Vir Das: Landing' in 2023. The actor-comedian has starred in films such as 'Go Goa Gone' and 'Delhi Belly'. *—PTI*

NIFTY CROSSES 25,000

Sensex hits all-time high of 83K; investors gain ₹6.59L cr

NEW DELHI, 12 SEPT

Investors' wealth soared Rs 6.59 lakh crore on Thursday as markets surged to record high levels with the benchmark Sensex breaching the historic 83,000-mark for the first time.

A sharp fag-end rally drove the 30-share BSE Sensex to the 83,000 level for the first time. The barometer surged 1,593.03 points or 1.95 per cent to hit its lifetime intra-day peak of 83,116.19.

The index ended at a record high of 82,962.71, up by 1,439.55 points or 1.77 per cent.

PHOTO: PTI

The Nifty50, too, soared 415 points to a lifetime high of 25,433, crossing the 25,400 level for the first time ever.

Tracking a rally in equities, the market capitalisation of BSE-listed firms surged Rs 6,59,895.19 crore to Rs 4,67,36,045.21 crore (USD 5.57 trillion). Among the 30 Sensex firms, Bharti Airtel, NTPC, Mahindra & Mahindra, JSW Steel, Adani Ports, State Bank of India, Tech Mahindra, Tata Steel, Larsen & Toubro and Kotak Mahindra Bank were the biggest gainers.

Nestle emerged as the only laggard from the blue-chip pack. A total of 2,335 stocks advanced while 1,612 declined and 122 remained unchanged on the BSE.

Also, 278 stocks hit their 52-week highs while 36 declined to their 52-week lows. *—PTI*

3 students out on joyride killed on City's airport road

BENGALURU, 12 SEPT

Three students died in a road accident on Bengaluru's airport road. The victims, 22-year-old Suchith, Rohith, and Harsha, were all in their fourth year of BSc Agriculture at Gandhi Krishi Vigyana Kendra (GKVK).

The accident occurred on the Chikkajala flyover, leading from Bengaluru to Ballari, at 1.30 a.m. According to reports, the students were on a long drive when their two-wheeler collided with a lorry. Investigations indicate that Suchith, who was riding the bike, might have been attempting to change lanes at high speed when the collision happened. Following the crash, the driver of the lorry fled the scene. The Chikkajala traffic police are pursuing leads to trace the vehicle and its driver. At the time of the accident, the trio was accompanied by two other friends on a separate bike, who witnessed the event.

The Chikkajala traffic police have filed a case under sections 106 (causing death by negligence) and 281 (rash driving) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS). *—Salar News*

MANIPUR GOVT PARTIALLY LIFTS BAN ON INTERNET

IMPHAL, 12 SEPT

The Manipur government conditionally restored internet broadband services on Thursday. However, the ban on mobile internet shall continue.

Internet services in the five Imphal valley districts – Imphal East, Imphal West, Kakching, Thoubal and Bishnupur – were suspended on Tuesday after the protests by the students had turned violent.

The ban, meant to prevent the spread of fake and concocted social media posts following last week's "drone attacks" and subsequent protests, was supposed to stay for five days.

In a fresh incident of arson in strife-torn Manipur, a primary health centre was torched by unidentified persons in Jiribam district on Thursday.

The incident took place in Borobekra area, less than 200 metres from a police outpost, early in the morning, they said.

No injuries were reported as nobody was inside the PHC at the time of the incident. Security forces have rushed to the spot. *—PTI*

PM MEETS THE CHAMPS

PM Narendra Modi during an interaction with India's Paris Paralympics contingent, in New Delhi, on Thursday ***PHOTO: PTI*** ***>>>More on Page 8***

Crime no ground for demolition: SC

NEW DELHI, 12 SEPT

Alleged involvement in a crime is no ground to demolish properties, Supreme Court said on Thursday and ordered a civic body in Gujarat to maintain status quo and not threaten to bulldoze the house of an accused in a criminal case.

Observing that such demolition threats are inconceivable in a country where the law is supreme, the court said it cannot be oblivious to such actions that may be seen as "running a bulldozer over the laws of the land".

"Moreover, the alleged crime has to be proved through due legal process in a court of law. T," it added.

The bench issued a notice to the Gujarat government and the civic body of Kathlal in Kheda district of the state on a plea of one Javedali M Saiyed seeking protection from the proposed demolition. *—PTI*

'MIGRATION WILL RISE'

Kannada grps object to B'luru-Hosur Metro

BENGALURU, 12 SEPT

The proposed Metro link between Bengaluru and Hosur, Tamil Nadu's industrial hub, has sparked controversy. Pro-Kannada groups have raised concerns that the project will lead to an increase in migration to Bengaluru, putting a strain on local resources.

Chennai Metro Rail Limited is currently preparing a feasibility report for a Metro extension from Bommasandra to Hosur, which would be the first interstate Metro line in southern India. However, pro-Kannada activists are questioning why Karnataka isn't prioritising Metro expansion to its own industrial towns like Ramanagara or Bidadi instead of extending it to Hosur. "There is already a significant influx of people from Tamil Nadu into border areas like Attibele and Electronic City. Extending Bengaluru Metro to Hosur will only make migration easier, putting pressure on jobs, housing and public services meant for Kannadigas," TA Narayan Gowda, President of Karnataka Rakshana Vedike, told Salar News.

PHOTO: ANI

BMRCL is carrying out a feasibility study for the route up to Attibele, while CMRL is evaluating the section from Bommasandra to Hosur, said Srivas Rajagopalan, PRO of BMRCL. Karnataka government is careful about agreeing to the project fully as it is worried about sharing the costs, especially since it has been losing business investments to Hosur. The proposed 23km link would include 12 stations and a metro depot, with 12km of the route in Karnataka and the remaining stretch in Tamil Nadu.

The President of Karnataka Rakshana Vedike said: "If this project gets approved by our government, we will not hesitate to protest against it and that protest can turn violent at any time."

Gowda said the rise in migrants will impact the culture of the State. "All these migrants might pose a threat to our State language. Kannadigas are already forgetting their language and culture due to the influence of Western Culture. When migrants travel to our State, they will influence the locals as well," he said.

Kannada Chaluvali Vatal Paksha leader Vatal Nagaraj told Salar News at no cost pro-Kannada organisations will allow the linking of Hosur to Bengaluru Metro. "Hosur rightfully belongs to Karnataka and the government of Tamil Nadu should not even dream of this project. We already have an influx of hundreds of Tamils and other migrants in our cities and we cannot take it anymore." *—Salar News*

Putin proposes meet with Modi during BRICS talks

NEW DELHI, 12 SEPT

National Security Advisor Ajit Doval on Thursday met Russian President VladimirPutin amid renewed efforts to find a solution to the Ukraine conflict.

The meeting took place on the margins of a conclave of national security advisors of the BRICS (Brazil-Russia-India-China-South Africa) nations in St Petersburg.

In the talks, Putin hoped that Prime Minister Narendra Modi will travel to Russia's Kazan next month to attend the annual summit.

He also proposed a bilateral meeting with Modi on 22 October on the sidelines of the BRICS summit to analyse bilateral engagement.

"We are waiting for our good friend Modi and best regards to him," the Russian media quoted Putin as saying in the meeting with Doval. Doval's visit to Russia comes two-and-a-half weeks after Modi paid a high-profile trip to Ukrainian capital Kyiv.

Modi said both Ukraine and Russia should sit together without wasting time to end the ongoing war and that India was ready to play an "active role" to restore peace in the region. *—PTI*

President Vladimir Putin meets NSA Ajit Doval in St Petersburg ***PHOTO: X/@RUSEMBINDIA***

52 arrested in clashes in Mandya

Situation is under control and additional forces deployed: Police

NAGAMANGALA, 12 SEPT

Fifty-two people have been arrested following the clashes that broke out between two groups during a Ganesha idol procession at Nagamangala in Mandya district on Wednesday.

Mobs went on a rampage targeting shops and vehicles leading to a tense situation. A few people, including two policemen, sustained minor injuries in stone-pelting. Prohibitory orders preventing the assembly of more than four people have been imposed till 14 September in the town as a precautionary measure, police said. The situation has been brought under control and additional security forces have been deployed, they said.

According to police, an argument broke out between two groups, when the Ganesha idol procession by devotees from Badarikoppalu village reached a place of worship on Wednesday, and some miscreants hurled stones. Police used mild force to disperse the crowd. The group of youth that carried out the procession halted and staged a protest near a police station, demanding immediate arrest of those responsible for the violence.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah said the violence is an act of miscreants that threatens the peace and tranquillity of the society. The government has taken the incident seriously and warned that ruthless action will be taken against those trying to create a divide on religious grounds, regardless of caste or religion, he said.

Mobs went on a rampage targeting shops and vehicles, leading to a tense situation **PHOTO: PTI**

Home Minister G Parameshwara said the clashes cannot be termed as "communal" as the incident happened on the "spur of the moment".

According to police, 53 people have been named in the FIR. "We have deployed additional forces from Karnataka State Reserve Police along with other police officials including those in civil clothes," Mandya Superintendent of Police Mallikarjun Baldandi said on Thursday.

Mandya District in-charge Minister N Cheluvarayaswamy said he instructed Deputy Commissioner and Superintendent of Police to conduct the peace meeting in the town in the next two days to bring back normalcy in the town. The minister said police are verifying the CCTV footage of the incident and after investigation, they will release all the innocent people.

The minister directed District Administration officials to assess the damages and list out the houses and shops that were damaged during the incident. Compensation will be given to the affected people and traders after discussing with Siddaramaiah.

Following the incidents, the Opposition BJP and JD(S) attacked Congress government. Leader of Opposition R Ashoka (BJP) alleged that the "attack" on Ganesha idol procession is a direct fallout of "appeasement politics. Stones were hurled, swords brandished and crude bombs thrown at Ganesha Visarjan Procession. Are we living in Karnataka or Taliban?" he asked. Union Minister Shobha Karandlaje demanded an inquiry into the clashes and alleged that Siddaramaiah and Congress are trying to "conspire against Hindus".

Union Minister for Heavy Industries and Steel and JD(S) leader HD Kumaraswamy said the incident is proof of 'failure' of law and order in the State. He also warned that "bad days are not far" for the Congress if it does not stop 'appeasement politics.'

The JD(S) president said the clashes occurred due to the "failure" and "inefficiency" of the state government. "Appeasement politics is not good," he added, taking a swipe at the ruling Congress. Responding to Parameshwara's statement downplaying the incident, Kumaraswamy retorted, "For them, it is not a big issue." *—PTI/ Salar News*

> **The violence is an act of miscreants which threatens the peace and tranquillity of the society. Ruthless action will be taken against those who are trying to divide on religious grounds, regardless of caste or religion**
>
> -Siddaramaiah, Chief Minister

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah took a Metro ride from KR Pura Metro station to Vidhana Soudha on Thursday ***PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD***

CM's plea: HC finishes hearing

BENGALURU, 12 SEPT

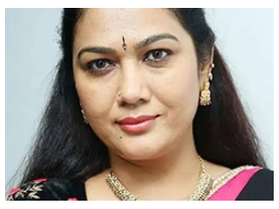
Karnataka High Court on Thursday completed its hearing on Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's petition challenging the legality of Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot's approval for his prosecution in Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA) case, and reserved its orders.

The court also extended its 19 August interim order directing the special court for people's representatives that was slated to hear complaints against him in the case, to defer its proceedings till the disposal of the petition. "Heard, reserved, interim order subsisting will continue till the disposal of the petition," Justice M Nagaprasanna said after completing the hearing.

The Governor on 16 August accorded sanction under Section 17A of Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988, and Section 218 of Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023, for the commission of the alleged offences as mentioned in the petitions of Pradeep Kumar SP, TJ Abraham and Snehamayi Krishna.

On 19 August, Siddaramaiah moved to the High Court challenging the legality of the Governor's order.

In the petition, the CM submitted that the sanction order was issued without due application of mind, in violation of statutory mandates, and contrary to constitutional principles, including the advice of the Council of Ministers, which is binding under Article 163 of the Constitution of India. *—PTI*



Rave party: Cops file chargesheet against Hema

BENGALURU, 12 SEPT

City police filed a chargesheet against Telugu actress Hema on Thursday, who has tested positive for drugs following a raid on a rave party. Central Crime Branch conducted the raid at a farmhouse in the City, resulting in Hema and 88 others being named in the chargesheet. According to CCB officials, forensic science laboratory reports confirmed the presence of MDMA, a popular party drug, in Hema's system. The rave party, held at GR Farms in Singena Agrahara, was organised by Vasu L, who is also listed in the chargesheet. The event took place near Electronics City on 15 May. *—Salar News*

Dasara festival: Pooja held for 11 palace cannons

MYSURU, 12 SEPT

In a time-honored tradition, a ceremonial pooja was performed for 11 palace cannons at Amba Vilas Palace in Mysuru as part of Dasara festivities. The ritual is an integral part of the preparations for the grand elephant savari, which will take place on Vijayadashami day, 13 October. The pooja is a customary practice observed by the rulers before initiating dry training for cannon firing. This tradition ensures that the cannons are blessed and ready for the 21-round salute that will precede the procession. *—Salar News*

4 GST officials suspended over extortion

BENGALURU, 12 SEPT

Four officials of Goods and Service Tax (GST) department who were arrested on Wednesday for allegedly assaulting and extorting Rs 1.5 crore from an IT company owner in Bengaluru have been suspended and suo motu action was taken against them. The raid conducted by the officials attached to Director General of GST Intelligence, Bengaluru zonal unit, on Wednesday "was unauthorised and not called for", a top GST official told Salar News on Thursday. *—Salar News*

BJP is falsely accusing Rahul over anti-quota statements: CM

BENGALURU, 12 SEPT

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah said on Thursday that BJP leaders' protest against Rahul Gandhi, falsely accusing him of making anti-reservation statements, is like "butchers protesting against animal cruelty".

He also pointed out that when former prime minister VP Singh implemented the Mandal Commission report, BJP launched the 'Kamandal' movement, attempting to fill people's minds with the opium of religion.

"In State, BJP opposed local body reservations, even filing a petition in Supreme Court led by the late Justice Rama Jois. Across country, BJP has consistently protested against reservation policies," said Siddaramaiah, according to a press statement issued by the CM's Office.

Siddaramaiah **PHOTO: PTI**

> **In State, BJP opposed local body reservations, even filing a petition in Supreme Court. Across country, BJP has consistently protested against reservation policies**
>
> -Siddaramaiah, Chief Minister

He said BJP leaders lack the understanding or wisdom to interpret Rahul's statement.

"The primary objective of the reservation is to ensure equal opportunities for all in education, employment, and access to resources. This isn't just something Rahul is saying - I stand by it too. How can this be construed as an anti-reservation statement?" asked Siddaramaiah.

Two days ago, Rahul, while giving a talk at Georgetown University in the USA, when asked about the future of reservations in India, said, "We will think of scrapping reservations when India is a fair place. And India is not a fair place."

Siddaramaiah also blamed BJP leaders for the social inequality that still persists in India, stating that the RSS, the ideological parent of the BJP, has defended the caste system since its very inception. *—PTI*

CADD GETS NEW CENTRE

CADD Centre, a leading multinational network specialising in engineering, project management, ICT and people skills training, has expanded its footprint with the grand opening of a new training facility in Marathahalli, Bengaluru. The inauguration ceremony took place on Thursday marking a milestone in the region's educational landscape. The inauguration was attended by Congress leader and AICC Secretary Mansoor Ali Khan.

PHOTO: SALAR

Back Chunchanagiri mutt in US, says DKS

BENGALURU, 12 SEPT

Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar has appealed Kannadigas and others to contribute towards the construction of Adi Chunchanagiri Mutt and Bairavanatha temple across a 20-acre campus at Franklin Township in New Jersey, US

"The Guru Peeta set up by Balagangadharanatha Swamiji in New Jersey is the Guru Peeta for all of us. Mutts are sacred places that calm and compose our minds. I visited the Bhairavnath temple set up by Balagangadharanatha Swamiji in Maharashtra. I am happy that the government of the USA has allowed the setting up of a similar temple here in New Jersey," Shivakumar said after visiting the campus.

Chief Architect Babu Kilara, who has designed other prominent spiritual centres in the USA such as Chinmaya Mission, Art of Living Centre and GSS Ashrama, apprised the DCM of the project. The mutt, conceived under the guidance of Balagangadharanatha Swamiji and now realised by Nirmalananda Swamiji, aims to introduce Karnataka's rich spiritual traditions to the international community. *—Salar News*

DK Shivakumar **PHOTO: SALAR**

1,100 stranded at Londa station after goods train derails near Dudhsagar

BENGALURU, 12 SEPT

At 1,100 passengers aboard the Shalimar Vasco Da Gama Express were left stranded at Londa station on Thursday following the derailment of a goods train. The incident occurred around 2pm between Sonalium and Dudhsagar stations near Hubballi.

The derailment caused disruptions to train services, resulting in multiple diversions and partial cancellations. To address the needs of the stranded passengers, South Western Railways (SWR) provided food and water at Londa station. Additionally, 25 buses were arranged to transport passengers affected by the partial cancellation of Train No. 18047, which was short-terminated at Londa.

Train No. 12779 Vasco Da Gama Hazrat Nizamuddin Express was rerouted via Madgaon, Roha, Panvel, Pune, and other stations. Furthermore, the Vasco Da Gama Shalimar Express (Train No. 18048), scheduled for 13 September, will now depart from Hubballi instead of Vasco Da Gama.

An accident relief train has been dispatched from Vasco Da Gama to facilitate restoration efforts. *—Salar News*

The derailment occurred between Sonalium and Dudhsagar stations near Hubballi **PHOTO: SALAR**

WATER POLLUTION

Address TG Halli dam issues: Min to CM

BENGALURU, 12 SEPT

To address water pollution issues and improve resource management, Environment Minister Eshwar Khandre urged Chief Minister Siddaramaiah to convene a meeting with the Ministers of Water Resources and Minor Irrigation for the purification of water from the Thippagondanahalli Reservoir. The reservoir also known as the TG Halli Dam is located 33km from Bengaluru and has a capacity of 1.07 TMC to 3.34 TMC.

Khandre's proposal aims to tackle the current state of the reservoir due to pollution by exploring treatment options. He suggested that the treated water could be repurposed for construction and industrial activities.

In his letter, Khandre cited the success of treating wastewater from high-rise buildings in Bengaluru and selling it for construction purposes. This initiative, he noted, has proven effective in conserving drinking water while also generating additional income for building owners.

He recommended establishing water treatment plants through public-private partnerships near the reservoir and other contaminated lakes in the City. He said that such measures could provide a source of water for industrial areas, including the Peenya Industrial Area. This approach, he argued, would not only ease the demand on the City's drinking water but also create additional revenue streams for the government.

Earlier this year, amid a severe water crisis in March, the State government permitted the commercial sale of treated water from local Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs) in residential complexes and gated communities. This measure, enacted by the Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB), allowed communities to sell 50 percent of their treated STP water for commercial purposes. *—Salar News*

Eshwar Khandre **PHOTO: PTI**

Govt Dental College gets new digital dentistry wing

BENGALURU, 12 SEPT

PHOTO: PTI

Government Dental College & Research Institute (GDC&RI) at Kalasipalya in Bengaluru has undergone a facelift with the introduction of advanced equipment and facilities.

Medical Education and Skill Development Minister Sharan Prakash Patil inaugurated the new digital dentistry wing and presided over the graduation ceremony on Thursday.

Supported by the Adani Foundation, the new dentistry centre has CAD/CAM systems that have revolutionised restorative dentistry by enabling precise and efficient production of dental prosthetics. This is the first such centre in a government hospital in the State. The centre also features Cone Beam Computed Tomography for oral surgery and implantology; Microscopic Endodontics for root canal treatments.

Patil told the students that as they step into the professional world, they must remember that each patient is a VIP and that effective communication helps in addressing patient-centric issues. *—Salar News*

Left veteran led students to make Indira quit JNU

He was SFI president from 1984 to 1986 and played an important role in developing it as a pan-India force

SITARAM YECHURY

12 AUG, 1952 - 12 SEPT, 2024

NEW DELHI, 12 SEPT

Veteran Marxist leader Sitaram Yehury, who got shaped in politics during the Emergency days, was brilliant in academics and a CBSE topper, but he earned a distinction when he led students of Delhi's Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) to push former prime minister Indira Gandhi to resign as the university's chancellor.

Following Emergency, in October 1977, Yechury led a group of students to Gandhi's residence and handed her a memorandum seeking her resignation as the JNU chancellor.

There was a protest in the university demanding Gandhi's resignation as the chancellor and the students decided to walk down to her residence and paste a memorandum demanding her resignation on the door.

As they reached Gandhi's residence, they were asked to send a delegation of five students inside. However, the students insisted that all of them should be allowed in, a request that was accepted.

When the students walked inside Gandhi's residence, they were surprised to see that the former prime minister herself came to meet them.

"She asked us what did we want and we said we wanted her to resign," Yechury had said.

A photograph of the JNU students surrounding Gandhi and a young Yechury reading out the memorandum is a part of history.

He joined the students' movement in the JNU in 1974 and became a leader of SFI. He was thrice elected as the president of the JNU Students' Union (JNUSU) within a span of two years. Yechury joined the Communist Party of India (Marxist) in 1975 and was arrested during Emergency for his political activities. He was the president of the SFI from 1984 to 1986 and played an important role in developing the student organisation as a pan-India force. *—PTI*

1. Sitaram Yechury leading a group of students to Indira Gandhi's residence to hand her a memorandum seeking her resignation as JNU chancellor in 1977; **2.** Yechury with Chinese Premier Deng Xiaoping in 1987; **3.** Yechury with Rahul Gandhi; **4.** Polit bureau members Brinda Karat, Yechury and Prakash Karat release party's manifesto in New Delhi; **5.** Yechury with Opposition leaders during INDIA bloc meeting in Mumbai ***PHOTOS: PTI/X***

LEADERS MOURN ACROSS POLITICAL FRONTS

NEW DELHI, 12 SEPT

Leaders cutting across the political spectrum condoled CPI(M) General Secretary Sitaram Yechury's passing, with many hailing him as an effective parliamentarian, a pillar of the CPI(M) and an "unrepentant Marxist" with a pragmatic streak.

Yechury,72, died at AIIMS in Delhi following prolonged illness. He had been in a critical condition for the past few days and was on respiratory support.

The CPI(M) also expressed profound grief over the death of its general secretary and described Yechury's passing as a big blow for the Left, democratic and secular forces.

Congress party chief Mallikarjun Kharge said Yechury was an excellent parliamentarian and an outstanding intellectual who served the people of India with pragmatism blended with idealism.

Congress general secretary in-charge communications Jairam Ramesh said Yechury was an "unrepentant Marxist with a pragmatic streak, a pillar of the CPI(M), and a superb Parliamentarian". BJP leaders and Union ministers also paid tribute to Yechury and said his contributions to public life would always be remembered.

Extending heartfelt condolences to Yechury's family and loved ones, Union minister and former BJP president Nitin Gadkari said the CPI(M) leader's contributions to public life would always be remembered. Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde, NCP (SP) supremo Sharad Pawar and Shiv Sena (UBT) chief Uddhav Thackeray condoled Yechury's death and hailed his commitment to his party and the values he brought to politics. *—PTI*

In his long years in public life, he distinguished himself as a seasoned parliamentarian who was known for his knowledge and articulation

-Rajnath Singh, Defence Minister

Saddened by the passing away of veteran leader Shri Sitaram Yechury ji. His career has been marked by contributions towards strengthening Indian democracy

-Jagdeep Dhankhar, Vice-President

I am very saddened by the passing away of Yechuryji. We had worked together and the friendship that had been established then continued till his very end

-Sonia Gandhi, Congress Chairperson

He is an unparalleled leader of the Communist movement. His death is an irreparable loss to the country at a time when the country and its people are facing a serious crisis

-Pinarayi Vijayan, Kerala CM

Sad to know that Sri Sitaram Yechury has passed away. I knew the veteran parliamentarian that he was and his demise will be a loss for national politics

-Mamata Banerjee, WB CM

Sitaram Yechury ji was a friend. A protector of the Idea of India with a deep understanding of our country. I will miss the long discussions. My sincere condolences to his family

-Rahul Gandhi, Leader of Opposition

Comrade @SitaramYechury was a fearless leader whose commitment to justice was evident from a young age, as he courageously stood against the Emergency

-MK Stalin, TN CM

Will support INDIA bloc, says Engineer Rashid

SRINAGAR, 12 SEPT

Awami Ittehad Party (AIP) supremo Sheikh Abdul Rashid alias Engineer on Thursday said that he would support the INDIA bloc candidates in the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly elections if the opposition group promises to restore Article 370 of the Constitution whenever they come to power at the Centre. "If INDIA alliance assures us that it will restore Article 370 when it comes to power in Delhi, I will tell every candidate of mine to pledge each vote of their supporters for them," Rashid, who won the Lok Sabha elections from the Baramulla constituency, told reporters here. Rashid was released on interim bail by a court on Wednesday to campaign for the polls. *—PTI*

BRS MLA offers saris to defectors, gets shoe threat

HYDERABAD, 12 SEPT

BRS MLA P Kaushik Reddy's offer to send saris and bangles to 10 party legislators who defected to the Congress, has evoked strong response from the women leaders of the ruling party who demanded an immediate apology from him. Congress leader and Chairperson of the Telangana State Women's Cooperative Development Corporation B Shobha Rani hit out at Reddy over his comments saying he insulted women with his disrespectful comments. At a press conference, Shobha Rani took out her shoe and warned the BRS MLA over his remarks. Reddy said he wants to send gifts--saris and bangles to the 10 BRS MLAs who joined Congress and asked them to wear it. Kaushik Reddy also said he would send the saris and bangles to the residences of the defected BRS MLAs by courier. *—PTI*

'We made progress on India-China talks'

GENEVA, 12 SEPT

Roughly 75 per cent of the "disengagement problems" with China are sorted out but the bigger issue has been the increasing militarisation of the frontier, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said on Thursday on the lingering border row in eastern Ladakh.

In an interactive session at a think-tank in this Swiss city, Jaishankar said the Galwan Valley clashes of June 2020 affected the "entirety" of India-China ties, asserting that one cannot have violence at the border and then say the rest of the relationship is insulated from it.

He said negotiations between the two sides to find a solution to the problem are underway.

"Now those negotiations are going on. We made some progress. I would say roughly you can say about 75 per cent of the disengagement problems are sorted out," he said at the Geneva Centre for Security Policy.

PHOTO: PTI

"We still have some things to do," Jaishankar said, responding to a question.

The external affairs minister indicated that the relationship can improve if there is a resolution to the row.

"We hope that if there is a solution to the disengagement and there is a return to peace and tranquility, then we can look at other possibilities," he said.

The Indian and Chinese troops are locked in a standoff in certain friction points in eastern Ladakh even as the two sides completed disengagement from several areas following extensive diplomatic and military talks. *—PTI*

Haryana elections: Cong, AAP release list

NEW DELHI/ CHANDIGARH, 12 SEPT

Congress on Thursday announced the names of eight more candidates for the Haryana Assembly polls, while leaving one seat for the CPI(M), as it accounted for all 90 seats in the state. With the fourth, fifth and sixth lists coming out in quick succession before the deadline for filing nominations which ends Thursday, the party declared candidates on 89 of the 90 seats. The fourth list came a few hours after Congress declared its third list of 40 candidates on Wednesday night.

AAP names 19 more candidates

The Aam Aadmi Party Thursday released the names of 19 more candidates in its sixth list for the Haryana Assembly polls, fielding senior leader Prem Garg from Panchkula.

The Arvind Kejriwal-led party had previously declared 70 candidates for the polls. *—PTI*

India's richest woman Savitri files nomination as Independent

HISAR, 12 SEPT

BJP's Kurukshetra MP Naveen Jindal's mother Savitri Jindal, who was an aspirant of a poll ticket from the party for the Haryana Assembly elections, filed her nomination from the Hisar seat as an Independent on Thursday. Forbes India has listed her as the richest woman in the country this year having a net worth of USD 29.1 billion. *—PTI*

Maharashtra minister's daughter joins NCP (SP)

MUMBAI, 12 SEPT

Maharashtra minister and NCP leader Dharmarao Baba Atram's daughter Bhagyashri Atram joined the NCP (SP) on Thursday, despite attempts by Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar to dissuade her from crossing over to the Sharad Pawar-led party.

State NCP (SP) president Jayant Patil and party leader Anil Deshmukh were present at the function held at Aheri in Gadchiroli district, where the minister's daughter joined the opposition party.

This development sparked speculation about a possible contest between Bhagyashri and her father, who is an MLA from Aheri, in the state assembly elections likely to be held in November. *—PTI*

ROW OVER PUJA

BJP, Oppn spar over PM's CJI home visit

NEW DELHI, 12 SEPT

With a row erupting over Prime Minister Narendra Modi attending the Ganesha Puja celebrations at Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud's residence, the BJP and its ally hit out at the opposition parties on Thursday, calling their reactions "reckless" and said casting "baseless aspersions" on the highest court sets a dangerous precedent.

Addressing a press conference at the BJP headquarters here, Lok Sabha MP and national spokesperson Sambit Patra hit back at the opposition and asked if the then Chief Justice of India (CJI) did not attend the Iftar party hosted by then Prime Minister Manmohan Singh.

"They do not have any objection to the prime minister meeting the chief justice of India but Ganesha Puja," he said and accused the opposition leaders of indulging in politics.

"I am surprised that if the prime minister meets the chief justice of India, you raise an objection. But when he (Rahul Gandhi) meets (US lawmaker) Illhan Omar, who is with Pok, in America, you have no objection," Patra added.

Prime Minister Modi on Wednesday participated in the Ganesha Puja at the CJI's residence here.

In a video, Chandrachud and his wife Kalpana Das were seen welcoming Modi at their house. Several opposition leaders and some lawyers of the Supreme Court reacted sharply to Modi attending the puja at the CJI's residence.

"Ganesha Utsav is being celebrated and people visit each other's house... I don't have information whether the prime minister has visited anyone's house," Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Sanjay Raut said. *—PTI*

Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud at the latter's residence in New Delhi ***PHOTO: PTI***

Akhilesh accuses BJP of Ayodhya land scam

LUCKNOW, 12 SEPT

Samajwadi Party President Akhilesh Yadav on Thursday accused the members of the ruling BJP and the government officials of involvement in a major land scam in Uttar Pradesh's Ayodhya.

The former Uttar Pradesh chief minister alleged that the ongoing land-related theft in the holy city was part of a broader pattern of corruption facilitated by those in power.

Yadav had earlier on 10 July also attacked the Uttar Pradesh government over the alleged sale of land in Ayodhya to outsiders of late, claiming a scam of billions of rupees and demanded a thorough investigation into these land deals.

He had latched on to a news report in the Indian Express to attack the Yogi led dispensation.

PHOTO: PTI

"Officials and BJP members are engaged in loot and where there is theft, there will be no development. I thank our party leaders for exposing the dark reality of the looting in Ayodhya," Yadav said on Thursday. "If they can commit such theft in a sacred place like Ayodhya, imagine how much more is happening in other districts," he added.

Yadav claimed that farmers, who wanted to donate land for good causes, were denied compensation when the circle rate was increased. *—PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

MP rains: 11 dead, including 7 in Datia wall collapse

DATIA, 12 SEPT

Heavy rains in several parts of Madhya Pradesh on Thursday resulted in 11 deaths, including seven in a wall collapse in Datia, prompting Chief Minister Mohan Yadav to chair a high level meeting to provide relief to people, officials said. Three people died in Gwalior, where more than 500 people have been rescued from flooded areas, while one person died in Bhind, the officials said. Seven persons were killed after a wall of a medieval-era fort adjacent to a house collapsed due to heavy rains in Khalkapura area in Datia town at 4am.

The heavy rains battering Gwalior and Chambal regions in the north of the state since Tuesday is expected to abate in the next two days.—*PTI*

2 inmates of TN hostel killed in refrigerator blast

MADURAI, 12 SEPT

Two inmates of a ladies hostel were killed here on Thursday and at least two others sustained injuries following explosion of a refrigerator, which led to smoke and fire, authorities said. Madurai District Collector M S Sangeetha told reporters that two women were dead and two others, who sustained injuries, were being treated at a hospital. The incident occurred early in the morning while the inmates were asleep and two of them, Parimala and Saranya, were declared brought dead by doctors at a government hospital. The collector said a case appears to be pending before a court, when asked on claims that the hostel was unlicensed, that the building was old and civic authorities had reportedly issued a 'demolition notice' to the owner last year. —*PTI*

UP woman injured in fresh wolf attack at home

BAHRAICH, 12 SEPT

In another late night wolf attack, a 50-year-old woman was seriously injured at her home in a village of Mahsi Tehsil here, her family members said on Thursday. She has been hospitalised and is undergoing treatment, they said. The incident took place around 10.30pm on Wednesday in Kowinpura village, Bhawani Pur, Bahraich Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) Ajit Pratap Singh said.

According to the woman's son-in-law, Dinesh, Pushpa Devi was asleep in her house along with other family members, when the incident took place. He said that a child had left the door open after which a wolf came in and attacked her. Locals also arrived at the spot after hearing the noise and seeing the crowd the wolf fled into a sugarcane field, Dinesh said. —*PTI*

HC asks Khedkar to respond to UPSC's perjury plea

EW DELHI, 12 SEPT

Delhi High Court on Thursday sought former probationary Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer Puja Khedkar's response on a plea by the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) seeking initiation of perjury proceedings against her for allegedly giving false statement and affidavit in the court. Justice Jyoti Singh issued notice to Khedkar on the UPSC's application and granted her three weeks to file reply to it. The court listed the matter for further hearing on November 26. The UPSC contended that the 31 July communication by which Khedkar's candidature was cancelled was communicated to her on her registered email id the same day. However, she made a false statement in the court that she has not been served with the order and she came to know of it only through the press release issued by the UPSC, it claimed.—*PTI*

Madrassas 'unfit' for school edu: NCPCR to SC

NCPCR says madrassa deprives students of fundamental right

NEW DELHI, 12 SEPT

Madrassas are "unsuitable" places for children to receive "proper education" and the education imparted there is "not comprehensive" and is against the provisions of the Right to Education Act, the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) has told Supreme Court.

The child rights body told the top court that children, who are not in formal schooling system, are deprived of their fundamental right to elementary education, including entitlements such as midday meal, uniform etc.

NCPCR said madrassas merely teaching from a few NCERT books in the curriculum is a "mere guise" in the name of imparting education and does not ensure that the children are receiving formal and quality education.

The child rights body stated that due to the absence of provisions of the RTE Act, 2009, the madrassas are also deprived of entitlement as in Section 21 of the Act of 2009.

NCPCR said madrassas merely teaching from a few NCERT books in the curriculum is a mere guise
PHOTO: PTI

"A school is defined under Section 2(n) of the RTE Act, 2009, which means any recognised school imparting elementary education. A madrassa being out of this definition has no right to compel children or their families to receive madrassa education," the NCPCR said.

It said most of the madrassas fail to provide a holistic environment to students, including planning social events, or extracurricular activities for 'experiential learning.

In a breather to about 17 lakh madrassa students, the apex court on 5 April had stayed an order of the Allahabad High Court that scrapped the Uttar Pradesh Board of Madarsa Education Act, 2004 calling it "unconstitutional" and violative of the principle of secularism.

A three-judge bench headed by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud had issued notices to the Centre, the Uttar Pradesh government and others on the pleas against the High Court order.

The High Court had on 22 March declared the Uttar Pradesh Board of Madarsa Education Act, 2004, "unconstitutional" and violative of the principle of secularism, and asked the state government to accommodate students in the formal schooling system. —*PTI*

50 BOOKED IN SHIMLA

Muslim panel offers to raze illegal mosque

SHIMLA, 12 SEPT

PHOTO: PTI

Amid prevailing tension here over the Sanjauli mosque issue, a Muslim welfare committee on Thursday offered to demolish the unauthorised part while members of the community themselves pulled down a wall of a mosque in government land in Mandi.

A delegation of the welfare committee during a representation to Shimla Municipal Commissioner Bhupendra Attri said Muslims living in the locality are permanent residents of Himachal Pradesh and it was taking the step to preserve harmony and brotherhood.

The panel comprises the Imam of the mosque and members of the Waqf board and the mosque management committee.

Meanwhile, Shimla police registered eight FIRs against more than 50 people involved in the protest held on 5 and 11 September at Sanjauli demanding demolition of the unauthorised portion of the mosque.

Police said there are about 14 mosques in Shimla and security has been beefed up.

Members of the Dev Bhoomi Sangarsh Committee, which had given the protest call against the unauthorised construction in the mosque, welcomed the move of the Muslim welfare committee.

Amid all these developments, Himachal Pradesh minister Anirudh Singh claimed that former chief minister Jai Ram Thakur gave Rs 2 lakh for construction of a portion of the Sanjauli mosque during his tenure and the BJP was now trying to disturb peace in the state. —*PTI*

₹782.26 cr given to ineligible beneficiaries in Odisha: CAG

BHUBANESWAR, 12 SEPT

The previous BJD government in Odisha had released Rs 782.26 crore for distribution of financial assistance to 12.72 lakh "ineligible" beneficiaries under its Krushak Assistance for Livelihood and Income Augmentation (KALIA) scheme, a CAG report said.

In its report No 2 of the year 2024, CAG said the scheme was launched in December 2018 to provide financial assistance to farmers, landless agriculture households and assistance to vulnerable agricultural households, life insurance support to cultivators and landless agricultural labourers, and interest-free crop loan.

In February 2019, a sixth component 'KALIA scholarship' was added to provide scholarship on merit basis to the children of beneficiaries under the scheme pursuing professional courses in the state.

PHOTO: PTI

During its launch, the government had promised Rs 5,000 per family per crop season for five crop seasons and Rs 12,500 to landless farm labourers. The report said that two components of the scheme, financial assistance to vulnerable agricultural households and interest-free crop loan were dropped while remaining two other components (life insurance support to cultivators and landless agricultural labourers' and KALIA scholarship) are under planning stage even after more than two years from the commencement of the scheme. The Department of Agriculture had provided KALIA benefit assistance to 65.64 lakh beneficiaries during 2019-21 and released instalments thrice to 41.64 lakh beneficiaries, twice to 8.09 lakh beneficiaries and only once to 15.91 lakh beneficiaries. The auditor found that around 9.76 lakh were identified "ineligible during one stage of implementation while another 2.96 lakh were found ineligible in a later stage. —*PTI*

IN UNIFORM SERVICES

Odisha gives nod to 10% quota for ex-Agnineers

BHUBANESWAR, 12 SEPT

Odisha government on Thursday approved a proposal to reserve 10 per cent jobs for ex-Agniveers in the state's uniform services.

The government also allowed transfer of equity shares to Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone Limited (APSEZ) from Shapoorji Pallonji Port Maintenance Pvt Ltd and Odisha Stevedores Ltd.

The proposals in this regard were approved at the Cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi. The Cabinet also approved a proposal providing jobs to unmarried daughters and stepdaughters of government employees on compassionate ground, Chief Secretary Manoj Ahuja said.

Odisha government approved framing of Odisha Ex-Agniveers (Recruitment to Uniform Services) Rules, 2024 to reserve 10 per cent seats for ex-Agniveers in the uniform service.

The proposed rules aim to provide ample opportunities to ex-Agniveers to secure job in uniform service like police, forest, excise, fire or any services as decided by the government from time to time by providing 10 per cent horizontal reservation for ex-Agniveers in all Group C and D posts in direct recruitment in the uniform services of the state. —*PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

NAKED WOMAN WITH RUPTURED HEAD FOUND IN UP

KANPUR, 12 SEPT

A 40-year-old woman's semi-naked body with partially ruptured head has been found on the Delhi-Varanasi national highway here, police said on Thursday.

According to the police, the body was spotted on Wednesday morning by a man, who alerted them and also reported that stray dogs had been nibbling at it.

An investigation has been initiated in the matter, they said, adding that based on the circumstances in which the body was found, there is a possibility the victim was raped and murdered before her body was dumped on the highway.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (South) Ravindra Kumar said it's also possible that the victim died in a road accident.

Apart from the local police, forensic experts also reached the spot and collected eight teeth and other bone fragments for analysis, he said.

Footage from CCTV cameras at a nearby hospital showed a woman of similar build crossing the service lane towards the highway just hours before the body was found. The woman in the video was wearing the same trousers as those found on the body, the police.

No CCTV cameras are installed at the location where the body was discovered, they said.

The police said that further surveillance footage led the police to the woman's residence in Kanpur's Govind Nagar area, about 4 km from where the body was found.

The victim's husband told the police that his wife was suffering from chronic cervical pain and had been unable to sleep for several nights, the DCP said. —*PTI*

2 arrested in MP for raping women, assaulting jawans

INDORE, 12 SEPT

Police have arrested two people in the assault on a young Army officer and his friend, police said.

A young Army officer of Military Headquarters of Warfare (Mhow) Infantry School, along with his friend was assaulted by 7-8 unknown assailants and one of their two women friends were raped states the FIR.

Indore Rural SP Hitika Vasal police have identified six accused.

Badgonda police station in-charge Lokendra Singh Hirore said the officers, aged 23 and 24, undergoing Young Officers (YO) course at the Infantry School in Mhow cantonment town, had gone out for a picnic on Tuesday along with two female friends.

At about 2 am on Wednesday, seven unidentified men arrived near the picnic spot on Mhow-Mandleshwar road and started beating up one of the officers sitting in a car and raped the women, he said.

Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi slammed BJP, alleging that law and order in states ruled by the party is almost "non-existent".

Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra also lashed out at the BJP, saying the prime minister talks big about women's safety, but women across the country are still waiting for a serious effort for their safety. This audacity of the criminals is a result of the total failure of the administration and the unsafe environment prevailing in the country due to this which is a restriction on the freedom and aspirations of the daughters of India, Rahul said. "Both the society and the government should be ashamed and think seriously – how long will they turn a blind eye to the responsibility of protecting half the population of the country!" he said. —*PTI*

SC stays NGT order limiting number of people during Ganesha immersion

NEW DELHI, 12 SEPT

Supreme Court on Thursday stayed a National Green Tribunal direction restricting the number of people to 30 in 'dhol-tasha' groups involved in the Ganesha festival, including idol immersion rituals, in Pune.

Having decided earlier in the day to take up a Pune-based 'dhol-tasha' group's plea against the NGT order for hearing at 2pm, a bench comprising Chief Justice DY Chandrachud and Justices JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra also issued a notice to state authorities on it.

In a brief hearing, lawyer Amit Pai said that 'dhol-tasha' has had a very "deep cultural significance" in Pune for over a hundred years and it was started by Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak.

He added that the 30 August direction of the NGT will affect such groups.

The NGT had directed the Pune Police to ensure that the total number of 'dhol-tasha-zanj' members in each group did not exceed 30.

A devotee immerses an idol of Lord Ganesha in the Arabian Sea during the Ganesh Chaturthi, in Mumbai, on Wednesday
PHOTO: PTI

Seeking an early hearing, the lawyer had told the top court that there was an urgency as the Ganapati festival was going on.

In a bid to control noise pollution, the NGT had restricted the number of people in the 'dhol-tasha' groups for the Ganapati festival to 30.

The festival of 'Ganesha Chaturthi' began on 7 September. It is celebrated for 10-11 days.

'Dhol-tasha' groups have been an integral part of traditional festivals in some parts of Maharashtra. —*PTI*

LABOUR UNREST

Samsung workers strike in TN over wages

CHENNAI, 12 SEPT

Labour unrest in the industrial belt of neighbouring Sriperumbudur emerged as a section of employees belonging to Korean electronics giant Samsung have resorted to a strike, pressing for various demands including wage revision, sources said on Wednesday.

The facility located about 40 km from here in Sriperumbudur produces various consumer durable products across categories. It employs about 1,750 people who work in various shifts, round-the-clock.

Since Monday, a section of workers went on strike demanding wage revision, recognising their union among others, sources said.

"We have been informing the management but they did not heed to our demands. We need a better pay package, and demand recognition for the union," they told PTI.

Samsung employees in Sriperumbudur, Tamil Nadu, have gone on strike demanding wage revisions and union recognition
PHOTO: PTI

According to the agitating employees, Samsung has formed a union in July comprising about 100 of them which was not agreed upon by the workers who are on strike.

"Already there is a union backed by the CITU (Centre for Indian Trade Unions). In this context, what is the reason to set up a new union?" a worker asked.

Due to the employees' agitation, production is likely to be affected at the facility which has been operating for the last 15-16 years in the region.

Asked about Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M K Stalin currently in the United States seeking investments

- An official said the meeting with Labour department officials in Sriperumbudur held on Wednesday remained 'inconclusive' and they have planned to hold another meeting with them on Friday.

The employees are sitting under a temporary shelter adjacent to the factory as part of the agitation.

The Sriperumbudur industrial belt is home to several companies including Korean automaker Hyundai, float glass manufacturer Saint-Gobain, among others.

An official said the meeting with Labour department officials in Sriperumbudur held on Wednesday remained 'inconclusive' and they have planned to hold another meeting with them on Friday. —*PTI*

Woman, who lost family in landslide, loses fiance too

WAYANAD, 12 SEPT

As 24-year-old Shruti was barely coming to grips with the loss of her entire family in the recent landslides in Wayanad district, she suffered another devastating blow as her fiancé died on Wednesday after meeting with an accident.

A spokesperson of the private hospital here where the 27-year-old Jenson was admitted, confirmed that he succumbed, at 8.50 pm, to the injuries he suffered in the accident.

Shruti's fiance, who met with an accident on Tuesday and was being treated at the Dr Moopen Medical College, was in an extremely critical condition.

Shruti, an accountant at a hospital in Kozhikode district, lost nine members of her family in the landslides that struck Chooralmala and Mundakkai villages. Her only support during the tragic times was Jenson, with whom she had got engaged on 2 June after a 10-year-long courtship.

PHOTO: PTI

On 29 August, the couple had visited the Puthumala graveyard where some of her family were buried and had reaffirmed their commitment to each other. When the couple had reaffirmed their commitment to each other, Jenson, who works for a car cleaning company in the district, had said that he promised himself that he would never leave the side of his school-time friend Shruti when she told him about the tragedy that had befallen her family. The couple, initially set to tie the knot in December with fanfare, were planning to have a simple court-registered marriage in September. —*PTI*

FIRST CIVILIAN SPACEWALK DONE

Billionaire tech entrepreneur Jared Isaacman was among four civilians who took the first private spacewalk 700 kilometres above earth on Thursday on a SpaceX mission. The daring endeavour was a part of Polaris Dawn crew's five day journey through earth's orbit.
PHOTO: X/@SPACEX

Yechury, a convivial face of pragmatic Left politics

Polyglot, amiable and an eclectic conversationalist who could hold forth on film songs as much as politics, CPI-M's fifth general secretary Sitaram Yechury was the pragmatic leader with friends across the political spectrum.

The three-time party chief, who passed away on Thursday after prolonged illness at Delhi's All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), took over the reins of the party when Left fortunes were on the decline. He was 72.

Quite unlike his predecessor Prakash Karat, from whom he took over in April 2015 and who was known for hardline positions, Yechury thrived on the challenges of coalition politics. In this way, he was more akin to his mentor, the late party leader Harkishan Singh Surjeet.

While Surjeet was a key player in the coalition era during the National Front government of VP Singh - formed in 1989 - and the United Front government of 1996-97, both supported from outside by the CPI-M, Yechury was the go to man in the UPA years from 2004-2014.

Yechury, who was born in Chennai and studied at Delhi's St Stephen's College and Jawaharlal Nehru University, was a trusted ally of United Progressive Alliance chairperson Sonia Gandhi in Manmohan Singh's 10 years as prime minister.

He was the first non-Congress leader Gandhi called after she met then president APJ Abdul Kalam in 2004 when she turned down the post of prime minister and rallied for Singh.

Earlier, Yechury, one of the Left's most recognised faces, worked with Congress leader P Chidambaram to draft the common minimum programme for the United Front government.

It was an equation that survived the shock withdrawal of support by the Left to the UPA in 2008 over the Indo-US nuclear deal. Yechury played an important role in the discussions with the UPA government on the issue.

Sitaram Yechury remained one of the most vocal critics of the Narendra Modi government and its liberal economic policies ***PHOTO: X/@SITARAMYECHURY***

Expressing his condolences, Congress leader Jairam Ramesh described him as an "unrepentant Marxist with a pragmatic streak, a pillar of the CPI(M), and a superb Parliamentarian". Yechury, who famously loved old Hindi film songs, books and endless conversations on politics, was a Rajya Sabha MP for 12 years till 2017, remaining a powerful voice of Opposition.

At the end of his tenure, he refused to take another term and said in his farewell speech in the Upper House that he came to Parliament "reluctantly". As Left activists, they used to say it was better to stay far away from the "gol building" (the round building), he remarked.

Yechury became general secretary of the CPI-M at the 21st party Congress in Visakhapatnam on 19 April, 2015 , taking over from Karat at a time the party was down from 43 MPs in 2004 to nine in 2014. He was subsequently re-elected to the post in 2018, and 2022.

The Surjeet protégé's negotiation skills were crucial as he joined his predecessor, Prakash Karat in the UPA-Left Coordination Committee.

He was known for his strong and articulate speeches in Rajya Sabha on issues ranging from the plight of the farmers and the working classes to the government's economic and foreign policies and the growing threat of communalism.

The CPI-M leader was fluent in Hindi, Telugu, Tamil, Bangla, and also Malayalam. He was also well-versed in Hindu mythology, and often used those references in his speeches especially to attack the BJP.

Yechury remained one of the most vocal critics of the Narendra Modi government and its liberal economic policies.

His alliance-building skills came to use again for the Left in the run-up to the 2024 general elections. In 2018, ahead of 2019 Lok Sabha polls, the Central Committee of CPI-M had rejected the proposal of having any understanding or alliance with Congress. Yechury had then offered to resign as the general secretary.

However, in the run-up to the 2024 elections, as talks for a united opposition grouping started and opposition parties got together to form the INDIA bloc, CPI-M was part of it. Yechury remained among the key faces of the alliance.

Though CPI-M was part of the INDIA bloc in the recent Lok Sabha polls, Congress and communist parties fought separately in Kerala, the last remaining Left bastion where CPI-M won only one seat. However, being a part of the bloc helped the CPI-M and it won a seat in Rajasthan and two seats in Tamil Nadu, taking its total tally up to four, from three in 17th Lok Sabha.

His journey in politics started with the Students' Federation of India (SFI), which he joined in 1974 and became a member of the party the very next year. He was arrested a few months later during the Emergency.

After his release, Yechury was elected president of the JNU Students' Union thrice. In the SFI, he became the all-India joint secretary in 1978 and its president soon thereafter. He did his post-graduation from Jawaharlal Nehru University again with a first-class, but could not complete his PhD due to his arrest during the Emergency.

His rise in the party was swift. In 1985, he was elected to the Central Committee of the CPI-M and to the Politburo in 1992 at the age of 40 and then party chief in 2015. Born in a Telugu-speaking family in Chennai on August 12, 1952, Yechury's father Sarveswara Somayajula Yechury was an engineer in the Andhra Pradesh State Road Transport Corporation. His mother Kalpakam Yechury was a government officer.

He grew up in Hyderabad and his family moved to Delhi in 1969. A bright student, Yechury achieved the all-India first rank in the Central Board of Secondary Education examinations and subsequently did his graduation in economics from St. Stephen's College, Delhi.

In a recent interview to PTI, Yechury said the 2024 verdict was a setback for BJP but also expressed concern over his party's marginally improved performance.

Yechury is survived by his wife Seema Chishti and his two children, Akhila and Danish. His elder son, Ashish Yechury, passed away due to Covid in 2021. Yechury was earlier married to Indrani Mazumdar. *—PTI*

LETTERS Write to us at salarenglishdigital@gmail.com

SALAR ساڈھ

IISc scientists develop 'brain on a chip' tech

Researchers at the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) have developed a brain-inspired analog computing platform capable of storing and processing data in an astonishing 16,500 conductance states within a molecular film.

They believe it could be a game-changer, revolutionising industrial, consumer and strategic applications.

Published on 11 September in the journal Nature, this breakthrough represents a huge step forward over traditional digital computers in which data storage and processing are limited to just two states, the IISc said.

- The platform could potentially bring complex AI tasks, like training Large Language Models to personal devices like laptops and smartphones

Such a platform could potentially bring complex AI tasks, like training Large Language Models (LLMs) to personal devices like laptops and smartphones.

These developments are currently restricted to resource-heavy data centres, due to a lack of energy-efficient hardware. With silicon electronics nearing saturation, designing brain-inspired accelerators that can work alongside silicon chips to deliver faster, more efficient AI is also becoming crucial.

"Neuromorphic computing has had its fair share of unsolved challenges for over a decade," explained Sreetosh Goswami, Assistant Professor at the Centre for Nano Science and Engineering (CeNSE), IISc, who led the research team. "With this discovery, we have almost nailed the perfect system – a rare feat," he said.

The molecular system at the heart of the platform was designed by Sreebrata Goswami, Visiting Professor at CeNSE. In a material film, molecules and ions create countless unique memory states, many of which have been inaccessible so far. Most digital devices can access only two states--high and low conductance, without being able to tap into the infinite number of intermediate states possible.

By using precisely timed voltage pulses, the IISc team found a way to effectively trace a much larger number of molecular movements, and map each of these to a distinct electrical signal, thus forming an extensive "molecular diary" of different states.

According to IISc, the fundamental operation underlying most AI algorithms is quite basic– matrix multiplication, a concept taught in high school maths. But in digital computers, these calculations hog a lot of energy. The platform developed by the IISc team drastically cuts down both the time and energy involved, making these calculations a lot faster and easier.

"This project brought together the precision of electrical engineering with the creativity of chemistry, letting us control molecular kinetics very precisely inside an electronic circuit powered by nanosecond voltage pulses," explained Goswami.

Researchers said the key challenge was characterising the various conductance states, which proved impossible using existing equipment. The team designed a custom circuit board that could measure voltages as tiny as a millionth of a volt, to pinpoint these individual states with unprecedented accuracy.

It also turned this scientific discovery into a technological feat.

Using their AI accelerator, the team recreated NASA's iconic "Pillars of Creation" image from the James Webb Space Telescope data on a tabletop computer. This was achieved in a fraction of the time and energy required by traditional systems, IISc said.

The team includes several students and research fellows at IISc. They also collaborated with Stanley Williams, Professor at Texas A&M University and Damien Thompson, Professor at the University of Limerick, it added.

The researchers believe that this breakthrough could be one of India's biggest leaps in AI hardware, putting the country on the map of global technology innovation. Navakanta Bhat, Professor at CeNSE and an expert in silicon electronics led the circuit and system design in this project.

With support from the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, the IISc team is now focused on developing a fully indigenous integrated neuromorphic chip. "This is a completely home-grown effort, from materials to circuits and systems," he emphasised. "We are well on our way to translating this technology into a system-on-a-chip," he added. *—PTI*

The Prinicipal Investigator, Prof Sreetosh Goswami (seated left), and Prof Navkanta Bhat who headed the circuits and systems design for the project of Indian Institute of Science Bangalore, pose for a photograph with others in Bengaluru on Thursday ***PHOTO: X/@IISCBANGALORE***

TERRORISM HAS EVOLVED, BUT ARE WE KEEPING UP?

When members of Al-Qaeda flew commercial jetliners into New York's World Trade Center on 11 September, 2001, the idea of who was a terrorist crystallised for the world.

But, 23 years on, the reality is there is no one "kind" of terrorist.

As security forces around the world grapple with myriad threats from all manner of groups, an essential agreement on who the opponent is becomes crucial.

An effective definition of terrorism is necessary to provide the operational rules of engagement to national security agencies and, at an international level, to facilitate combined efforts based on the shared perspective of peace and war, of friends and enemies, of the threat scenarios.

Good, evil and the terrorist

A person is a terrorist because of what they do, not because of what they believe, and for their actions, they are prosecuted.

Discussing terrorism on the theoretical level of "good and evil" is counterproductive and pointless. Even if we all agree that terrorism is the expression of evil, it is not possible to reach an agreement on who the terrorists are.

So this is one more reason to change how we measure terrorism, forgetting "good and evil", instead focusing on the results of terrorism, banning its effects we cannot accept. Those effects, unlike the ideas that constitute motivations, can be counted and measured.

Defining terrorism

Ten years after 9-11, Alex P. Schmid, Distinguished Fellow at the International Centre for Counter-Terrorism (ICCT) and Director of the Terrorism Research Initiative (TRI), collected the opinions of dozens of experts to arrive at a scientific definition of terrorism for the 21st century.

The result has been a long list of characteristics, among which the objective of "terrorising" is emphasised, identifying communication as a specific element of terrorism, and the use of violence, indiscriminately directed towards "civilian" targets.

This plethora of definitions makes it difficult to come up with a common operational perspective for countering terrorism threats.

A history of violence

Italy is notorious for the violence it experienced during the last 30 years of the 20th century from groups on the far left, such as the Brigate Rosse (Red Brigades) to those on the far right (Nuclei Armati Rivoluzionari) along with the mafia and other organised crime.

Counterterrorism laws that still address the phenomenon were created based on that experience ***PHOTO: X***

Counterterrorism laws that still address the phenomenon were created based on that experience.

However, today's terrorism no longer has anything to do with the terrorism of that time. So old regulatory tools are still used to regulate a phenomenon that has changed.

n recent years, terrorism has proven to be flexible, adaptable and opportunistic. It is very skilled in exploiting an enemy's vulnerabilities and from this ability it gains strength.

Salad Bar terrorism

Ideologically today one can talk about Salad Bar terrorism (or Mixed Ideology terrorism), where the ideological dimension is present, but it is articulated according to a personal taste, to justify the choice of violent affirmation of one's ideas.

Yet, the actual reasons for terrorism can be found in terrorism itself as a choice and action. They lie in the conviction terrorists have that only violence can change a situation already irrecoverable, urgent, and dramatic.

This fragmentation is the main feature of terrorism affecting young people's identities (since young people are the main victims of terrorist propaganda and recruitment). A fragmentation where geographical, political and cultural borders are no longer useful, reorganised by the global network of communication technologies.

More than ideology

The first challenge that comes out is the need to reconsider the meaning of nation and state.

The paths that can lead to terrorism are many and this is why the definition of terrorism based on reasons and motivations does not work: the unpredictable Salad Bar Ideology offers many ways to become a terrorist.

Ideologies no longer provide sufficient analytical categories to identify and, subsequently, prevent threats effectively. The reasons that drive radicalization today are multiple and come from various inputs.

All these have, so far, led to poor results, because they are based on the wrong assumptions of continuity, linearity, and ideal coherence, while today's Salad Bar Terrorism offers a circular route, rapid and unpredictable, always original for everyone.

A new approach

A new approach, abandoning the ideological dimension as a founding dimension of terrorism is pivotal and it means "an act of terrorism is such for the effects that this act generates, not for the causes that drove it". This approach is not just backed up by the previous empirical results and failures of counterterrorism efforts. It also has a theoretical foundation from the field of crisis management, where a crisis is defined as an event whose effects are not controlled by a system.

It also has a practical basis, in seeking an agreement on "what terrorism is" by referring to the effects, to the damage caused, for which an objective assessment can be agreed. This is in total alignment with the needs of the criminal justice system and legal framework.

Terrorism is no longer what it used to be, but those who fight terrorism have not realised this. Bold decisions have to be made to abandon obsolete approaches and tools that cannot deliver any more results. *—PTI/ 360info*

US President Joe Biden briefly wore a red Trump campaign hat at an event commemorating the 23rd anniversary of the 9/11 attacks. The White House later explained it was a way to underline the unity theme of the day ***PHOTO: X***

Pakistan reports fifth case of mpox virus

KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA, 12 SEPT

Pakistan has reported its fifth confirmed case of the M-Pox virus in Peshawar, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Health Minister Qasim Ali Shah said in a video message on Wednesday, Dawn reported. The mpox virus presents with flu-like symptoms and pus-filled lesions. However, it is usually mild but can kill. Children, pregnant women, and people with weakened immune systems are at higher risk of complications. "The fifth case, a 33-year-old patient, came to Pakistan from a Gulf country on 7 September via the Islamabad International Airport," Shah said. After his travels, the patient then went to Peshawar and stayed at a hotel. Following that, he went to a private clinic for treatment, Shah further said. "The patient has been quarantined at his house in Lower Dir," Shah said, adding that he did not meet any relatives after arriving from Saudi Arabia, and apart from those on his flight, he had no other contacts in Pakistan. ***—ANI***

Pak cop kills blasphemy suspect at police station

QUETTA, 12 SEPT

A policeman opened fire inside a police station in the southwestern Pakistani city of Quetta on Thursday, killing a suspect held on accusations of blasphemy, a local official said. The slain man was identified as Syed Khan. Police said he had been arrested the day before, after officers snatched him from an enraged mob that claimed he had insulted Islam's Prophet Muhammad. According to police official Mohammad Khurram, the officer involved in the fatal shooting has been arrested. Khurram did not provide further details. Killings of suspects while in police custody are rare in Pakistan, where accusations of blasphemy — sometimes rumours — often spark rioting and rampage by mobs that can escalate into lynching .Under blasphemy laws, anyone found guilty of insulting Islam can be sentenced to death. ***—PTI***

S Korea says N Korea has fired ballistic missile

SEOUL, 12 SEPT

North Korea fired multiple short-range ballistic missiles toward the sea on Thursday, South Korea's military said, days after North Korean leader Kim Jong Un vowed to put his nuclear force fully ready for battle with its rivals. South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said it detected the missiles launched from North Korea's capital flying 360km before landing in the waters between the Korean Peninsula and Japan. Japanese Prime The reported fight distances suggest the missiles were designed to attack South Korea. The South Korean Joint Chiefs of Staff condemned the launches as a provocation that poses a serious threat to peace. In a Monday speech marking his government's 76th foundation anniversary, in a speech Kim said North Korea faces "a grave threat" because of what he called "the reckless expansion" of a US-led regional military bloc that is now developing into a nuclear-based one. ***—PTI***

6 UN staffers among 34 killed in Israeli air strike

Hamas, Hezbollah fire 130 rockets targeting Israeli soldiers

TEL AVIV, 12 SEPT

Six staff members of the UN agency were among those killed in Israeli airstrikes at a school-turned-shelter in Gaza, the United Nations said.

The six staffers belonged to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), the agency that assists Palestine refugees.

At least 34 people were killed in the strikes, UN News reported citing media reports. UNRWA said the shelter manager and other team members were among the victims

"Just Tragic. #Gaza Six @UNRWA colleagues killed today when two airstrikes hit a school and its surroundings in Nuseirat in the middle areas," the UNRWA saidon X.

"This is the highest death toll among our staff in a single incident. Among those killed was the manager of the UNRWA shelter and other team members providing assistance to displaced people. Sincere condolences to their families and loved ones. This school has been hit five times since the war began," it added.

The UNRWA school in Nuseirat, located in the Middle Area of the Gaza Strip, was sheltering around 12,000 displaced people, mainly women and children. This marked the fifth time that it had been hit since the conflict began 11 months ago. Earlier on Wednesday, the United Nations said the site had been previously deconflicted with the Israeli forces.

The UNRWA school in Nuseirat was sheltering around 12,000 displaced people, mainly women and children ***PHOTO: X/@THEREALTALKIN***

- UN Secretary-General, deplored the killings and said these "dramatic violations of international humanitarian law" needs to stop. UN had said the site had been previously deconflicted with the Israeli forces

UN Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres deplored the killings and said these "dramatic violations of international humanitarian law" needs to stop.

"What's happening in Gaza is totally unacceptable. A school turned shelter for around 12,000 people was hit by Israeli airstrikes again today. Six of our @UNRWA colleagues are among those killed. These dramatic violations of international humanitarian law need to stop now," the UN chief stated in a post on X.

Hamas & Hezbollah hammer Israel with 130 Rockets

Hamas and Hezbollah pounded northern Israel on Wednesday in one of the largest aerial attacks. As many as 130 rockets were fired by the Iran-backed groups, targeting Israeli soldiers. Hamas' armed wing - the Al-Qassam Brigades - claimed that it had attacked the headquarters on an IDF brigade with 30 missiles from Lebanon. Hezbollah said that it launched over 100 rockets at Israel in 9-back-to-back assaults in a single day.

—Agencies

INDIAN-ORIGIN SOLDIER KILLED IN WEST BANK

JERUSALEM, 12 SEPT

A 24-year-old Indian-origin Israeli soldier from the Bnei Menashe community was killed in a vehicle-ramming attack close to the West Bank's Beit El settlement, community members said on Thursday.

Staff Sergeant Geri Gideon Hanghal was a resident of Nof HaGalil and a soldier in the Kfir Brigade's Nahshon Battalion, the Israeli Army said.

The suspect was named by Israeli security sources as 58-year-old Hayil Dhaifallah, from the central West Bank town of Rafat. Sergeant Hanghal's funeral will be held on Thursday, they said. Hanghal immigrated to Israel from the northeastern part of India in 2020.

Some 300 Bnei Menashe youngsters are said to be doing Army duty during the current war, most of them serving in combat units. *—AP*

PHOTO: X/@CJ_CHEP

FACE 6 YRS IN PRISON

Three lawyers of Navalny go on trial in Russia for 'extremism'

PETUSHKI, 12 SEPT

Three lawyers who once represented the late Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny went on trial Thursday in Russia, part of the Kremlin's unrelenting crackdown on dissent that has in recent years reached levels unseen since the Soviet times.

The three — Vadim Kobzev, Igor Sergunin and Alexei Liptser — were arrested in October 2023 on charges of involvement with an extremist group. The case has been widely seen as a means to ramp up pressure on the Kremlin's fiercest foe at the time and to discourage defence lawyers from taking on political cases.

When they were arrested, Navalny was already serving a 19-year prison term on several criminal convictions, including extremism. The extremism charges against the opposition politician stemmed from a 2021 court ruling that outlawed his organisations in Russia — the Foundation for Fighting Corruption and a vast network of regional offices — as extremist groups.

Until December 2023, Navalny was serving time in two different penal colonies in the Vladimir region east of Moscow. In December, he was transferred to a remote prison above the Arctic circle. In February 2024, he suddenly died behind bars in what his team and his widow Yulia Navalnaya charged to be a murder ordered by the Kremlin. Officials have rejected the accusations.

The trial of the three lawyers is also taking place in the Vladimir region, in the town of Petushki. Their attorneys repeatedly petitioned the courts to hold the proceedings in Moscow, where the three were held in pre-trial detention, but were denied. *—AP*

Lawyers Igor Sergunin, Alexei Liptser and Vadim Kobzev in the defendants' cage ***PHOTO: X***

FORMER PERU PREZ DIES AT 86

LIMA, 12 SEPT

Alberto Fujimori, whose decade-long presidency began with triumphs righting Peru's economy and defeating a brutal insurgency only to end in a disgrace of autocratic excess that later sent him to prison, has died. He was 86.

He had been pardoned in December from his convictions for corruption and responsibility for the murder of 25 people. His daughter said in July that he was planning to run for Peru's presidency for the fourth time in 2026.

He took over a country ravaged by runaway inflation and guerrilla violence, mending the economy with bold actions including mass privatizations of state industries. He also defeated fanatical Shining Path rebels, winning him broad-based support. *—AP*

PHOTO: X/@ALBERTOFUJIMORI

Former Bangladesh PM Zia admitted to hospital

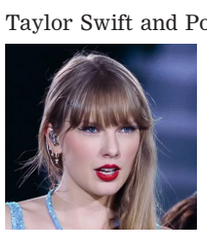
DHAKA, 12 SEPT

Former Bangladesh prime minister Khaleda Zia was admitted to a private hospital in the early hours of Thursday, according to a media report. The 79-year-old Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) chairperson arrived at the Evercare Hospital from her Gulshan residence around 1.40am, BNP media cell member Sayrul Kabir Khan was quoted as saying by the Dhaka Tribune newspaper. Her physician said the medical board has recommended several tests and she has been placed in a private cabin following her admission to the hospital. "The next course of her treatment will be determined after reviewing the test results," he said. On 21 August, Zia had returned home after 45 days treatment at the same hospital. Zia, who was under house arrest for the past five years, was freed on 6 August. *—PTI*

Taylor Swift wins big at MTV Video Music Awards

NEW YORK, 12 SEPT

Taylor Swift and Post Malone took home the first award of the 2024 MTV Video Music Awards for best collaboration, handed to them by Flavor Flav and Olympian Jordan Chiles. Swift started her speech by giving remembrance to everyone who lost their lives and loved ones during 9/11, 23 years ago, before discussing Malone. "There is a reason Post Malone is everyone in music's favorite person to collaborate with," she shifted her attention to him. "It has taken forever for me to get him to stop calling me ma'am." Women dominated the award show. *—AP*



Taylor Swift ***PHOTO: X/@TAYLORSWIFT13***

Pak militants kill cop in attack on polio workers

PESHAWAR, 12 SEPT

Unknown gunmen killed a policeman on security duty with polio vaccinators in Pakistan's restive northwestern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province on Thursday in a second attack within 24 hours and the third one since Monday.

The gunmen on motorbikes opened fire at the team of polio workers killing constable Noor Alam in Domel police station jurisdiction in Bannu district bordering Afghanistan, police said here. The assailants escaped after the attack.

An angry mob put the body of the slain cop in front of the police lines to protest the rising trend of targeted killings of policemen on duty with polio teams in southern districts of the province.

On Wednesday, police constable Alam Khan and a polio worker were killed after unidentified gunmen ambushed a team of polio vaccinators in Salarzai tehsil of Bajaur district. No one immediately claimed responsibility for Wednesday's attack. Militants frequently target the polio workers in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province.

Meanwhile, in Lakki Marwat district, policemen are on protest for the last four days in view of the increased attacks on security personnel guarding the polio teams. Some officials also attributed the protests to the presence of the military in the district. *—PTI*

128 MISSING

199 dead in Vietnam after typhoon Yagi

A woman wades through a flooded street following the impact of typhoon Yagi in Vietnam ***PHOTO: X***

HANOI, 12 SEPT

Nearly 200 people have died in Vietnam in the aftermath of Typhoon Yagi and 128 are missing as flash floods and landslides take their toll, state media reported Thursday.

Vietnam's VNExpress newspaper reported that 199 people have died while more than 800 have been injured.

In the capital, flood waters from the Red River receded slightly but many areas were still inundated with water neck-high in some places.

In Hanoi's Tay Ho district, people waded through muddy brown water above their knees to make their way along one street, some still wearing their bicycle and motorcycle helmets after abandoning their vehicles along the way.

A few paddled along the road in small boats as empty water bottles, a stryofoam cooler and other flotsam drifted by; one man pushed his motorbike toward drier ground in an aluminum sloop.

Pedestrians hiked up their shorts as high as possible to avoid being soaked by the wake caused by a delivery truck powering its way through the water.

Yagi was the strongest typhoon to hit the Southeast Asian country in decades. It made landfall Saturday with winds of up to 149 kph. *—AP*

30 dead in Nigeria floods

Abuja, 12 Sept

Severe flooding in northeastern Nigeria has left 30 people dead and affected more than a million others, authorities said on Wednesday. The current flooding comes nearly two years after Nigeria's worst flooding in a decade killed more than 600 people across the country. *—AP*

Rains batter Louisiana

LOUISIANA, 12 SEPT

Hurricane Francine made a landfall on the Louisiana coast, strengthening into a Category 2 storm on Wednesday (local time), according to The Washington Post. It was a Category 2 storm with winds reaching 100 mph at its strongest. Francine is the third hurricane of the year to make landfall in the United States, after Beryl on July 8 near Matagorda, Texas, and Debby on August 5 near Steinhatchee, Florida. *—ANI*

The Pinheiros River in emerald green ***PHOTO: X/@FNCDIALOGUE***

DROUGHT MAKES BRAZIL'S SAO PAULO RIVER EMERALD GREEN

SAO PAULO, 12 SEPT

A major river in the Brazilian metropolis of Sao Paulo is suddenly emerald green and clear skies this week turned from blue to grey. Environmental threats in recent days have transformed the colours of the city's landscape. The state's environmental authority attributes the Pinheiros River's new green hue to an algae bloom, the result of severe drought that has significantly lowered water levels. Brazil is enduring its worst drought since nationwide measurements began over seven decades ago, with 59 per cent of the country under stress — an area roughly half the size of the US. Uncontrolled, wildfires — in the Amazon rainforest have ravaged protected areas and spread smoke worsening air quality nationwide. *—AP*

FOR 10 YEARS

Ex-CIA agent who spied for China jailed

WASHINGTON DC, 12 SEPT

A former Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) officer, was sentenced to 10 years in prison for spying for the Chinese government.

Alexander Yuk Ching Ma, 71, of Honolulu, was arrested in August 2020 after admitting to an undercover FBI agent that he sold US secrets to China, the US Department of Justice said on Wednesday.

He admitted that he had facilitated the provision of classified information to intelligence officers employed by China's Shanghai State Security Bureau (SSSB).

According to court documents, Ma, a US citizen born in Hong Kong worked for the CIA from 1982 until 1989.

Alexander Yuk Ching Ma ***PHOTO: X***

- In Hong Kong Ma's relative provided SSSB with large volume of classified information in return for USD 50,000 in cash

As CIA officers, both Ma and his relative held top secret security clearances that granted them access to sensitive and classified CIA information, and both signed non-disclosure agreements, officials said. Ma admitted in the plea agreement, in March 2001, over a decade after he resigned from the CIA, that he was contacted by SSSB intelligence officers, who asked him Ma to arrange a meeting between his relative and the SSSB.

During the meetings that were held in a Hong Kong hotel room for three days, Ma's relative provided the SSSB with a large volume of classified US information in return for USD 50,000 in cash.

In March, Ma took up a job as a contract linguist in the FBI's Honolulu Field Office.

"The FBI, aware of Ma's ties to PRC intelligence, hired Ma as part of a ruse to investigate his activities and contacts with the SSSB," prosecutors said on Wednesday. Ma, they said worked part-time at an offsite location for the FBI from August 2004 until October 2012. *—ANI*

Rupee rises 4 paise to close at 83.95 against US dollar

MUMBAI, 12 SEPT

The rupee traded in a narrow range to settle 4 paise higher at 83.95 (provisional) against the US dollar on Thursday amid a positive trend in domestic equities and foreign fund inflows. Forex traders said rupee trade was range-bound with a slight positive bias on positive domestic equities. However, a rebound in the US Dollar and a surge in crude oil prices capped sharp gains. The USD/INR pair traded within a well-defined range on active intervention by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), they added. At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local unit opened at 83.97 and witnessed an intraday high of 83.95 and a low of 83.99 against the American currency. The domestic unit finally settled for the day at 83.95 (provisional), higher by 4 paise over its previous close. On Wednesday, the rupee settled 1 paisa lower at 83.99 against the American currency.—*PTI*

Gold drops ₹250; silver surges ₹2,000/kg

NEW DELHI, 12 SEPT

Gold prices declined Rs 250 to Rs 74,350 per 10 grams in the national capital on Thursday, while silver rates surged to reclaim the 87,000 level, according to All India Sarafa Association. On Wednesday, the precious metal or pure gold (99.9 per cent purity) ended at Rs 74,600 per 10 grams. However, silver price rallied Rs 2,000 to touch a two-week high of Rs 87,000 per kilogram on Thursday. The silver metal had finished at Rs 85,000 per kg in the previous session. In the past three sessions, the withe metal has surged Rs 3,200 per kg. Traders said the silver continued its strong trend for the third-straight session owing to strong industrial offtake leading to a jump in the prices of the metal.—*PTI*

Apraava secures 300 MW solar project from NTPC

NEW DELHI, 12 SEPT

Integrated energy solutions provider Apraava Energy on Thursday said it has secured a 300 MW solar project from state-owned power giant NTPC. The project will be set up in Rajasthan, within a scheduled completion period of 24 months. It was secured through an e-reverse auction mechanism at a tariff of Rs 2.65 per kWh, a company statement said. Apraava Energy has signed a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) with NTPC Ltd for a 300 megawatt (MW) solar energy project connected to the Interstate Transmission System (ISTS), according to the statement. This project further strengthens Apraava's presence in Rajasthan, following its maiden 250 MW greenfield solar project announced in January 2024, secured through NHPC. Apart from these two solar assets, Rajasthan also hosts Apraava's three existing wind projects with a combined capacity of 253.6 MW, along with three under-construction transmission projects.—*PTI*

In Aug, JSW Steel consolidates crude steel output

NEW DELHI, 12 SEPT

Sajjan Jindal-led JSW Steel on Thursday said its consolidated crude steel output in August rose marginally by one per cent to 23.16 lakh tonnes (LT). The company's consolidated crude steel production was 22.86 LT in the corresponding month of previous fiscal, JSW Steel said in a regulatory filing. "Consolidated crude steel production grew by one per cent year-on-year," it said. From its India operations, the company produced 22.49 LT of steel, up two per cent over 22.15 LT in the year-ago period. "Monthly crude steel production was higher by two per cent year-on-year in the Indian operations with a capacity utilisation of 91 per cent," it said. JSW Steel is the flagship business of the diversified, $24 billion JSW Group. —*PTI*

GOOGLE'S AI MODEL FACES EU SCRUTINY

Ireland launches inquiry into Pathways Language

LONDON, 12 SEPT

Irish watchdog acts as the company's lead regulator for the bloc's privacy rulebook PHOTO: PTI

European Union regulators said Thursday they're looking into one of Google's artificial intelligence models over concerns about its compliance with the bloc's strict data privacy rules.

Ireland's Data Protection Commission said it has opened an inquiry into Google's Pathways Language Model 2, also known as PaLM2. It's part of wider efforts, including by other national watchdogs across the 27-nation bloc, to scrutinize how AI systems handle personal data. Google's European headquarters are based in Dublin, so the Irish watchdog acts as the company's lead regulator for the bloc's privacy rulebook, known as the General Data Protection Regulation, or GDPR.

The commission said its inquiry is examining whether Google has assessed whether PaLM2's data processing would likely result in a "high risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals" in the EU.

Large language models like PaLM2 are vast troves of data that act as building blocks for artificial intelligence systems. Google uses PaLM2 to power a range of generative AI services including email summarising. The company did not respond to a request for comment.

The Irish watchdog said earlier this month that Elon Musk's social media platform X has agreed to permanently stop processing user data for its AI chatbot Grok.

The platform did so only after the watchdog took it to court the month before, filing an urgent High Court application to get X to "suspend, restrict or prohibit" processing of personal data contained in public posts by its users.

Meta Platforms paused its plans to use content posted by European users to train the latest version of its large language model after apparent pressure from the Irish regulators.

The decision "followed intensive engagement" between the two, the watchdog said in June. Italy's data privacy regulator last year temporarily banned ChatGPT because of data privacy breaches and demanded the chatbot's maker OpenAI meet a set of demands to resolve its concerns. —*AP*

META ANNOUNCES AVAILABILITY OF VERIFIED BADGE

MUMBAI, 12 SEPT

With more businesses embracing messaging to engage with their customers, Meta on Thursday announced a slew of new features and programmes including full availability of verified badge - a trust marker for small businesses to establish credibility and credentials with consumers.

At the WhatsApp Business Summit in Mumbai, Meta also spotlighted Artificial Intelligence tools for enhancing the messaging experience. To start with, Meta will make it easy to activate AI directly from WhatsApp Business app to enable businesses to engage more efficiently with their customers - it has recently started testing this in India, and says early results are exciting.

Meta said the line up of features and updates will help businesses across the country build a presence and create great in-chat experiences for customers while driving performance ahead of the upcoming festive season.

"The way we WhatsApp a business has only continued to grow... The manner in which Indians are WhatsApping businesses is second to none." According to the platform, the ease of WhatsApp has placed it at the centre of India's digital transformation, helping businesses with ideas and new models of growth. —*PTI*

SHARES MAY JUMP

Paytm re-applies for payment aggregator licence

BENGALURU, 12 SEPT

Paytm is gearing up to re-submit its application for a payment aggregator (PA) licence to the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). The CEO of the company Vijay Shekhar Sharma made this announcement during the Annual General Meeting on Thursday.

Paytm will focus on achieving profit after tax instead of centring on operational profit before employees stock option, the fintech's founder and CEO Vijay Shekhar Sharma said on Thursday.

"We would like to inform you that the company has received approval from the government of India, Ministry of Finance, Department of Financial Services, vide its letter dated August 27, 2024, for downstream investment from the company into PPSL," he said. The PA license would allow Paytm to expand its payment services offerings. According to some industry experts, this will allow the company to regain some of the market share too that they lost due to the closure of the payment banks facility.

"I'm trying to give you a little bit of reference to the dramatic impact AI technology will have on each of us. Financial Services will not be left behind. India has taken a leaf frog and become a sort of the leader in financial technology. Will have an opportunity and obligation to extend the same lead in AI technology," Sharma said.

As of now the share price of Paytm-One97 Communications Ltd is Rs 666 and it is expected that after the PA license, the price of each share may increase too. The company has been under the scrutiny of India's banking regulator and financial crime-fighting agency after the central bank ordered it to wind down its payments bank in January.

Paytm which is a subsidiary brand of One 97 Communications Ltd incorporated in 2000 is one of India's leading digital ecosystems for consumers as well as merchants. As of 31 March 2021, the company has a 333 million+ client base and at least 21 million registered merchants.

—*Salar News with PTI*

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Stalin during MoUs with three Fortune 500 companies in the US on Thursday PHOTO: X

TN inks pact worth ₹500cr with Caterpillar

CHENNAI, 12 SEPT

The Tamil Nadu government on Thursday said it has signed an MoU with Caterpillar Inc, a leading equipment manufacturer, which has committed Rs 500 crore investment for expansion of its facilities in the state.

In the presence of Chief Minister M K Stalin, who is on a US tour to attract investments, the MoU was signed on September 11 in Chicago between Caterpillar and the Tamil Nadu government for an investment of Rs 500 crore to expand the existing construction equipment manufacturing facilities in Tiruvallur and Krishnagiri districts.

During his official visit, in the presence of the chief minister, MoUs worth Rs 7,016 (barring Caterpillar's commitment) crore have been signed so far with 16 leading global companies in San Francisco and Chicago. The chief minister also met with senior executives of various leading global companies, inviting them to make new investments in Tamil Nadu, an official release here said.

Bhuvan Ananthakrishnan, Director of Caterpillar, Kirk

DIRECT FLIGHTS RESUMED

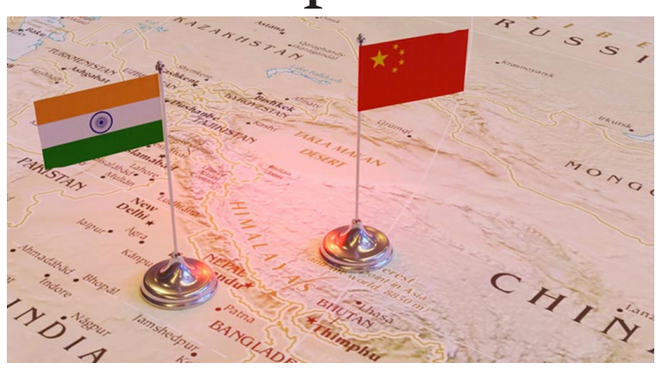
India and China discuss civil aviation cooperation

NEW DELHI, 12 SEPT

India and China on Thursday discussed ways to strengthen cooperation in the civil aviation sector, including resumption of direct flights between the two countries.

Civil Aviation Minister K Rammohan Naidu, Civil Aviation Secretary Vumlunmang Vualnam and other senior officials met with representatives from China on the sidelines of the Asia Pacific Ministerial Conference on Civil Aviation in the national capital.

In a post on X, Naidu said he along with senior officials had a courtesy meeting with a Chinese delegation led by Song Zhiyong. The meeting focused on exchange of views regarding "further strengthening civil aviation cooperation between the two countries, especially promoting early resumption of scheduled passenger flights between us," the minister said in the post.



The meeting focused on exchange of views regarding "further strengthening civil aviation cooperation between the two countries PHOTO: PTI

Later, Naidu told reporters that the Chinese side mentioned about resumption of direct flights but no decision has been taken. A decision will be taken after discussions with the external affairs ministry and other stakeholders.

Currently, there are no direct flights between India and China. The services stopped at the time of coronavirus pandemic. IndiGo and Air India had flight services to China. —*PTI*

SC to consider SpiceJet's plea against HC order

NEW DELHI, 12 SEPT

The Supreme Court said Thursday it will consider listing low-cost airline SpiceJet's plea challenging a Delhi High Court verdict grounding three aircraft engines for defaulting on payments to lessors.

A bench comprising Chief Justice DY Chandrachud and Justices JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra asked the counsel for the airline to send an e-mail seeking an urgent hearing of its plea against the high court verdict of 11 September.

"Please circulate the e-mail," the CJI said, adding that the appeal may be listed. A division bench of the Delhi High Court on Wednesday held that the carrier had violated an agreed interim arrangement for payment of dues and upheld an order of a single-judge bench asking the low-cost airline to ground the three engines for defaulting on the payments. —*PTI*

Domestic steel consumption to see 9-10% growth in FY25, says ICRA

NEW DELHI, 12 SEPT

Domestic steel consumption is likely to witness 9-10 per cent growth this financial year, rating agency ICRA said on Thursday.

The demand for steel was robust in the first quarter of the ongoing financial year with consumption growing at a rate of 15 per cent on a year-on-year basis amidst competitively priced imports. "ICRA projects the domestic steel consumption growth at a healthy 9-10 per cent in FY2025," the rating agency said in a statement.

Demand may record some sequential slowdown in the current quarter as it is seasonality associated with monsoon, following which government capex may display a back-ended pick up. "ICRA expects the industry to witness capacity utilisation at a decadal high of 88 per cent in spite of an all-time-high capacity addition of 15.6 MTPA (million tonnes per annum) in FY2025 as well as the surge in imports," the rating agency said.

PHOTO: PTI

- Domestic steel consumption is likely to witness 9-10 per cent growth this financial year, rating agency ICRA said on Thursday.

For the last three years, the steel sector is going through the fastest period of growth witnessed since the global financial crisis. In FY'24, the industry registered a consumption growth of 13.6 per cent, which is only marginally lower than the peak of 13.9 per cent registered in FY2006 during the golden period of the country's private sector capex.

Given the sub-par economic growth outlook in China, along with other leading global steel-producing and consuming hubs, steel trade flows have been redirected to high-growth markets like India. Consequently, domestic finished steel imports have been steadily rising since FY'23. —*PTI*

Kalpataru bags orders worth ₹2,774 crore

NEW DELHI, 12 SEPT

Kalpataru Projects International on Thursday said the company and its arms secured orders worth Rs 2,774 crore.

Kalpataru Projects International Ltd (KPIL), one of the largest Engineering & Construction companies listed in India along with its international subsidiaries have secured new orders/notification of awards of Rs 2,774 crore, a company statement said.

These include new orders in the Transmission & Distribution (T&D) business in overseas markets and the EPC project for Extension of Airport from Airports Authority of India. The new orders also include Design & Build project for residential buildings in India. Manish Mohnot, MD & CEO, The orders in the T&D and B&F business have further enhanced our market position

PHOTO: PTI

and significantly strengthened our order book, he said. With the orders wins, our YTD (year to date) order intake has reached around Rs 9,800 crores and additionally, we have greater business visibility, he stated. PTI KPIL is one of the largest specialised EPC (Engineering, Procurement, and Construction) companies engaged in power transmission & distribution, B&F, water supply & irrigation, railways, oil & gas pipelines, urban mobility (flyovers & metro rail), highways and airports. —*PTI*

MARUTI SUZUKI TO SELL 6 LAKH CNG UNITS THIS FISCAL

NEW DELHI, 12 SEPT

Maruti Suzuki India is looking to sell around 6 lakh CNG vehicles in the current fiscal, an increase of around 25 per cent as compared to FY24, according to a senior company executive.

The country's largest carmaker company on Wednesday expanded its CNG model range as it rolled out its premium hatchback Swift with S-CNG trims. "This fiscal we are targeting to sell around 6 lakh CNG units. We ended last year with sales of around 4.77 lakh units," Maruti Suzuki India Senior Executive Officer (Marketing and Sales) Partho Banerjee told PTI in an interaction.

In the April-August period this fiscal, the auto major has so far sold 2.21 lakh units, he added. —*PTI*

VISA TAKES MONTHS

Why are Indians going on holiday abroad?

NEW DELHI, 6 JUNE

Travel is on the rise again. According to the UN's tourism agency, international travel for all purposes reached 97 per cent of its pre-pandemic level in the first quarter of 2024. In some regions such as Africa and Europe, arrivals are already surpassing these levels.

Indian travellers, in particular, are adding to this growing trend – no nation's outbound tourism market is growing faster. In response to this rapidly expanding travel boom, Indian airlines ordered record numbers of new planes in 2024.

Tour operator Thomas Cook reported in May that Indian demand for holidays in Georgia has surged by a staggering 600

PHOTO: PTI

per cent year-on-year since the country launched its e-visa system for Indian tourists in 2015.

But, while this is a positive step towards easier travel for some Indian tourists, it will have no effect on new travellers. The Schengen visa process can also still take months, requires significant paperwork, and appointments are notoriously difficult to find.

So, where are they going?

Budget airlines flying to relatively nearby destinations have contributed to India's tourism rush, with south-east Asia increasingly popular. According to Google Trends, Vietnam was the most-researched destination by Indians in 2023.

That year, the Vietnam National Authority of Tourism reported a 231% increase in visitors from India compared with 2019. Other south-east Asian countries such as Thailand, Singapore and Indonesia are seeing similarly huge jumps in arrivals.

Indian travellers are hugely influenced by television and movies, often opting to visit the places they have seen in Bollywood.

It has been a similar story for Switzerland. Several Bollywood movies filmed there over the past 50 years have resulted in an Indian tourism love affair with the country. The Swiss tourist board even offers Bollywood tours to the various sites featured in Indian cinema. By 2040, the number of international tourist departures from India could hit 90 million, not far from the 104 million Chinese tourists who travelled in 2019. However, research suggests that Chinese holidaymakers are increasingly deciding to travel at home, meaning Indian tourists may soon overtake them. Courtesy, The Conversation

—*Courtesy, The Conversation*

SEMI, IESA to boost semiconductor ecosystem

NEW DELHI, 12 SEPT

Global semiconductor body SEMI and its peer IESA have announced a strategic agreement to boost the industry ecosystem in India, a joint statement said. As part of the agreement, the Indian Electronics and Semiconductor Association (IESA) will become part of the SEMI-- the organiser of Semicon events including Semicon India.

"This partnership will help SEMI grow a strong presence in this critical emerging market and enable both organisations to identify tangible strategies that leverage our combined strengths to enhance supply chain resilience," Ajit Manocha, President and CEO, SEMI said. The agreement was signed on the sidelines of

PHOTO: PTI

Semicon India 2024, the statement said on Wednesday.

This agreement will also pave the way for joint policy advocacy efforts, with IESA and SEMI working closely with both Central and State governments to drive incentives for product development and manufacturing, leveraging key programmes such as the Production Linked Incentive and Design Linked Incentive models, it said. —*PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

Rain washes out day four of Afg vs NZ test

GREATER NOIDA, 12 SEPT

The fourth day of the one-off Test between Afghanistan and New Zealand was abandoned due to rain here on Thursday. The toss was scheduled to take place at 9am but persistent rain continued to play spoilsport as the match officials called off the day's play for the fourth day in succession. "The fourth day of the only Test match between Afghanistan and New Zealand teams is also not going to be played due to continued rainfall," the Afghanistan Cricket Board (ACB) said in a statement. Not a single ball has been bowled across four days with the wet outfield preventing any action on the opening two days, raising serious questions over the preparedness of the venue to host the match. *—PTI*

PT Usha issues notice to treasurer over code violation

NEW DELHI, 12 SEPT

Indian Olympic Association President PT Usha has issued a show cause notice to the body's Treasurer Sahdev Yadav following a complaint that his election violates the country's National Sports Code. In a letter dated 10 September, Usha asked Yadav to give his reply by 24 September. "I am writing to you to bring to your attention a formal complaint that the Indian Olympic Association has recently received concerning your eligibility to contest the position of Treasurer in the last elections. "The complainant cites a ruling from Hon'ble High Court, which, according to the complainant, raises concerns about your eligibility to stand for election," Usha wrote in her letter to Yadav. *—PTI*

Martínez under fire for hitting TV cameraman

BOGOTA, 12 SEPT

A TV cameraman said Argentina goalkeeper Emiliano Martínez "slapped me" after Colombia's 2-1 win in a World Cup qualifying match. Jhonny Jackson told Colombian media he approached Martínez after the final whistle in Barranquilla on Tuesday as the goalkeeper greeted another player. Footage he captured shows the World Cup winner who Argentines know as Dibu hitting the camera, which quickly shakes to the ground after the impact. "Out of the blue he slapped me," Jackson told RCN Deportes on Wednesday. "I felt angry, very angry. I was working, just like he was. He was playing and I was shooting with my camera." *—PTI*

Tottenham's Bentancur charged by FA

LONDON, 12 SEPT

Uruguay midfielder Rodrigo Bentancur was charged with misconduct by the English Football Association (FA) on Thursday, three months after making an offensive comment about South Koreans in relation to a remark about Tottenham teammate Son Heung-min. Appearing on a Uruguayan television show in June, Bentancur was asked for a Tottenham player's jersey and replied, "Sonny's?" He added it could be Son's cousin, too, because "more or less they are all the same." Bentancur apologised to Son on Instagram, saying it was a "very bad joke" and he would "never disrespect you or hurt you." The FA said it is alleged Bentancur has "acted in an improper manner and/or used abusive and/or insulting words and/or brought the game into disrepute." The FA said it constituted an aggravated breach because it included "reference to nationality and/or race and/or ethnic origin." *—AP*

Indian player trying to dodge a South Korean player on Thursday PHOTO: X/@THEHOCKEYINDIA

India achieve 3-1 win against S Korea

India leads the table with 12 points

HULUNBUIR, 12 SEPT

Skipper Harmanpreet Singh scored a brace as defending champions India beat Korea 3-1 to register their fourth consecutive win at the Hero Asian Champions Trophy here on Thursday.

Paris Olympics bronze medallist India had defeated China 3-0, Japan 5-0 before thrashing last year's runner-up Malaysia 8-1. Already assured of a semifinal berth, India will play arch-rivals Pakistan on Saturday in their last league match in the six-team competition.

The top four teams from the league stages will qualify for the semifinals scheduled on Monday, while the final will be played next Tuesday. India continued their fine form and struck twice early in the first quarter to take a 2-0 lead. Araijeet Singh Hundal, who scored a brace against Malaysia, scored the first goal in the eighth minute before Harmanpreet, regarded as one of the world's best dragflickers, converted two penalty corners in the ninth and 43rd minutes. Korea's lone goal was scored by Jihun Yang in the 30th minute from a penalty corner. As has been the case in the tournament so far, the Indians started on an aggressive note with Araijeet handing his side the lead with a brilliant strike after being fed by Sukhjeet Singh.

India's reserve goalkeeper Suraj Karkera was impressive under the bar, denying Korea on a few occasions in the second quarter. After an impressive first quarter, the Indians seemed to have gone into a shell in the next 15 minutes as Korea dominated the proceedings with continuous forays on the rival citadel. The Indian defence stood tall until Korea pulled a goal just at the stroke of half-time through Yang whose effort went into the net after getting a deflection from Manpreet Singh's stick from a penalty corner opportunity. The Koreans secured back-to-back penalty corners in the 35th minute but India defended bravely. *—PTI*

Modi meets Paralympians

NEW DELHI, 12 SEPT

Prime Minister Narendra Modi met India's trailblazing Paralympians at his residence on Thursday to congratulate them for their record-smashing haul of 29 medals at the recently-concluded Paris Games.

In a 43-second video shared by the sports ministry, the PM can be seen congratulating the medal winners before an interaction with them.

Sports minister Mansukh Mandaviya and Paralympic Committee of India (PCI) head Devendra Jhajharia were also present during this interaction. Parmar could be seen getting his medal signed by Modi.

India gave its best-ever performance in the Paralympic Games by winning 29 medals, including an unprecedented seven gold, nine silver and 13 bronze medals.

The 84-strong contingent surpassed the previous best of 19 medals that was achieved in the Tokyo Games three years ago.

The stupendous performance included many firsts such as medals in track events of athletics, and a gold in archery (through Harvinder Singh). Since returning to the country, the Paralympians have been feted by the government with sports minister Mandaviya handing out Rs 75 lakh to the gold-medallists, Rs 50 lakh to the silver winners and Rs 30 lakh to the athletes who bagged bronze in the Games. *—PTI*

RHYTHM TO COMPETE IN 2 EVENTS IN ISSF WC FINAL

NEW DELHI, 12 SEPT

Rhythm Sangwan will be the only Indian shooter to compete in two events in the season-ending ISSF World Cup Final here after double Olympic-medallist Manu Bhaker opted for a three-month rest following her exploits in the Paris Games.

The National Rifle Association of India (NRAI) on Thursday announced a 23-member Indian squad for the tournament that will be held across rifle, pistol and shotgun categories from October 13 to 18 at the Dr Karni Singh Shooting Range.

A total of 11 Indian Olympians will gun for the title of the best shooter of the year along with the world's best in 12 individual Olympic events.

Rhythm Sangwan PHOTO: X/@SPORTSGRAMINDIA

The 22-year-old Bhaker scripted history for India in Paris as she won a bronze each in the women's 10m air pistol and 10m air pistol mixed team event (paired with Sarabjot Singh in the latter), and the Indian shooters participating in the prestigious tournament in the national capital will look to carry on the momentum at the familiar range.

Four shooters -- Divyansh Singh Panwar (men's 10m air rifle), Sonam Uttam Maskar (women's 10m air rifle), Rhythm (women's 10m air pistol & 25m pistol) and Ganemat Sekhon (women's skeet) have been selected by ISSF directly, while the rest of the members have been picked on the basis of their Olympic trials rankings. *—PTI*

CHESS OLYMPIAD

Praggs and Vaishali star in India's strong start

BUDAPEST, 12 SEPT

R Praggnanandhaa set the tone on the top board as the Indian men's team blanked Morocco 4-0, while the women romped home against Jamaica, conceding just a draw in the process, in the first round of the 45th Chess Olympiad here.

With world championship challenger D Gukesh taking a break in the opening round, Praggnanandhaa delivered the goods against Tissir Mohamed out of a Sicilian defense game while Vidit Gujrathi, Arjun Erigaisi and P Harikrishna also pulled off comfortable wins to start off confidently on Wednesday.

In the women's section, R Vaishali and Tania Sachdev scored fine victories in the first time control itself. However, on the other two boards there was stiff resistance as Divya Deshmukh had to sweat hard for a much-needed victory while Vantika Agarwal was forced to concede a draw in the endgame against her rival.

Armenian-American Levon Aronian came out of an early mishap to turn the tables and ensure smooth sailing for the American team into round two. As many as 99 teams in the open section started off with wins giving them all two points each. A total of 182 teams were paired while 15 teams were still grappling to reach Budapest.

Praggnanandhaa was up against a Sicilian by top Moroccan Mohamed who had only himself to blame after the opening got over. The Indian teen had a stronghold on the king side that he utilised to the fullest to take the first point home for the team.

Harikrishna faced some initial resistance from Anas Mosyad in a closed Sicilian but his superior understanding of the structure gave him the vital point. The second round will see the Indian men clash with a spirited Iceland. *—PTI*

Praggnanandhaa during his game with Mohamed Tissir, of Morocco, at the 45th Chess Olympiad in Budapest, Hungary, on Wednesday PHOTO: PTI

INDIAN RESULTS ROUND 1

Men	Women
Praggnanandhaa beat Tissir Mohamed	R Vaishali beat Adani Clarke
Jacques Elbilia lost to Arjun Erigaisi	Divya Deshmukh beat Rachel Miller
Vidit Gujrathi beat Ouakhir Mehdi Pierre	Raehanna Brown drew with Vantika Agrawal
Anas Moayad lost to P Harikrishna	Tania Sachdev beat Gabriella Watson

Chopra, Sable biggest hopes in Diamond League

Neeraj Chopra and Avinash Sable

PHOTOS: ANI

BRUSSELS, 12 SEPT

Javelin throw star Neeraj Chopra will have lofty expectations to live up to, while for steeplechaser Avinash Sable, it would be an opportunity to make up for a disappointing Olympics, when the the star-studded Diamond League season finale begins here on Friday, featuring the best of world athletics.

The showpiece is spread over two days for the first time and the field features top athletes from all continents, including an unprecedented number of Olympic medal winners, who will be vying for the top honours in 32 disciplines.

Pole vault world record holder Armand DuPlantis, American sprint queen Sha'Carri Richardson, and superstar hurdler Sydney McLaughlin-Levrone are among the big names who will light up the King Baudouin Stadium here.

National record-holding 3000m steeplechaser Sable, after finishing 11th in the Olympic Games, will be in action on Friday in his maiden appearance in the DL season finale. Chopra, who added a silver to his Olympic medal tally in Paris following a historic gold in the Tokyo Games, will be aiming to end his season on a high on Saturday.

It is for the first time that a DL finale features two Indians. Sable finished 14th in the overall Diamond League standings with three points from two meetings. But four athletes ranked higher than him -- Lamecha Girma (injured) of Ethiopia, Geordie Beamish of New Zealand, Ryuji Mura of Japan and Hillary Bor of the USA -- pulled out, allowing him to sneak inside the top 12 cut-off.

Five meetings out of the 14 in the DL series across the world this season had men's 3000m steeplechase event. *—PTI*

Kohli played a big role in turning match: Ponting

SOUTHAMPTON, 12 SEPT

Australian great Ricky Ponting hailed former captain Virat Kohli's "big role" in revolutionizing Test cricket in India and said the country's batters don't fear the big stage anymore, evidence of which is their success in challenging conditions overseas.

Ponting also lauded the contributions of former head coach Rahul Dravid, who stepped down from the post after guiding India to the T20 World Cup title triumph in June.

"Going back to Kohli's start of captaincy, (he) played a big role in turning the cricket around, and (Rahul) Dravid has continued the same in the recent four years. The influence of someone like that (Kohli) around a team would be great, and they've got star players," Ponting told Sky Sports.

"They won a game at the Gabba, which just doesn't happen. I think their batters adapt to overseas batting conditions very well. "I don't think they're as daunted by the Gabba or the Optus Oval as they maybe once were. Maybe it is a selection thing, or they just don't fear the big stage anymore," observed Ponting. *—PTI*

B'desh bring in Jaker Ali for Shoriful Islam against India

DHAKA, 12 SEPT

Bangladesh on Thursday named uncapped wicketkeeper batter Jaker Ali in place of injured pacer Shoriful Islam in the squad for the two-Test series in India beginning later this month.

The Tigers will be without the services of left arm-pacer Shoriful, who has been nursing a groin injury since the opening Test in Pakistan last month.

Shoriful's absence is the sole change from the 16-man squad that travelled to Pakistan, where Bangladesh recorded a historic 2-0 series victory. Instead of going for a like-for-like replacement for Shoriful, the selectors have handed a maiden Test call up to Jaker, who has represented Bangladesh in 17 T20 Internationals, debuting during the Asian Games last year. Mahmudul Hasan Joy, who also suffered a groin niggle during the Pakistan tour, has retained his spot. *—PTI*

ISL KICKS OFF

Mohun Bagan, Mumbai to renew rivalry

KOLKATA, 12 SEPT

Last season's finalists Mohun Bagan and Mumbai City FC will renew their rivalry as they kick off the 11th ISL here on Friday, marking the start of a new chapter with Kolkata Maidan's 'Big Three' now competing in India's top-tier football competition.

Mohammedan SC have joined their city rivals and two other century-plus old clubs Mohun Bagan and East Bengal in the Indian Super League this season.

Mohammedan Sporting secured promotion after winning the I-League last season, and the 103-year-old club will be eager to quickly adapt to the demands of top-flight football. Mohun Bagan were the first to join the ISL, in 2020, following their merger with ATK, forming ATK Mohun Bagan. Since their entry, the Mariners have been consistent and always seen as title contenders, including last season when they became the league champions by winning the Shield but lost to Mumbai City FC in the final for the ISL Cup.

Bangalore FC Captain Sunil Chhetri and Mohun Bagan midfielder Anirudh Thapa during practice PHOTOS: X/@BENGALURUFC/@MOHUNBAGANSG

East Bengal joined the top-tier league soon after Mohun Bagan through a separate consortium. Their entry completed the transition of Kolkata's two most famous clubs from the I-League to the ISL, reigniting the century-old rivalry at the highest level of Indian football. With the addition of Mohammedan Sporting, the Maidan will now witness the 'Big Three' of Kolkata battling it out in the ISL, adding a new layer of competition and excitement to the league, which is now bigger with 13 teams.

MATCH KICKS OFF: 7.30 PM

TEAMS TO PARTICIPATE

Bengaluru, Chennaiyin FC, East Bengal FC, Goa, Hyderabad, Jamshedpur, Kerala Blasters, Mohammedan FC, Mohun Bagan FC, Mumbai City, North East United, Odisha FC, Punjab

The opener between Mohun Bagan and Mumbai City promises to set the tone for an exhilarating season. Mohun Bagan and MCFC shared the top honours between them in the last couple of seasons. The challenge for head coach Jose Molina will be to develop new dynamics. The Islanders have won the ISL League Shield and ISL Cup twice with all of these triumphs coming in the last four seasons. *—PTI*

India's best chance to get maiden win in Davis Cup

STOCKHOLM, 12 SEPT

India's top players might be missing from the line-up but the country's Davis Cup team would still fancy its chances for a maiden victory against Sweden when it clashes with the host in the World Group I contest, starting 14 September.

India has not beaten Sweden in Davis Cup history and has landed in Stockholm without its best singles and doubles players -- Sumit Nagal and Yuki Bhambri -- for contrasting reasons.

Yet, the side would back itself to buck the trend in the sixth attempt, considering that the Swedish line-up is not intimidating.

The home conditions with the medium-speed court on offer, though, would certainly help Sweden more in the indoor tie at the Royal Tennis Hall as India would have preferred a faster court, given the fact that it has big servers.

The indoor courts are usually fast, the ball travels quick since the outside factors like wind do not interfere much in the play.

It will not be a surprise if captain Rohit Rajpal asks doubles specialist Balaji to do the singles duty, just like in the previous tie against Pakistan on the grass court. Balaji had delivered then, beating veteran Aqeel Khan in Islamabad early this year and he is in good rhythm in Stockholm also. Germany set to advance to the Davis Cup Finals after a 2-0 win over Chile

Maximilian Marterer and Yannick Hanfmann eased to straight-set singles victories Thursday for a winning 2-0 lead over Chile to all but ensure Germany advances to the Davis Cup Finals in November. *—PTI*